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ORPHEUS TODAY

SAINT FRANCIS OF THE TREES

AND OTHER VERSE

BY

WILLIAM NORMAN GUTHRIE

THE WESTERN LITERARY PRESS

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BY WILLIAM NORMAN GUTHRIE.

"To the Muse . . . her own"

"And yet, the best is never seen,-or said"



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ORPHEUS TODAY

SOME PRINT ERRORS.

l'age 45, line 26, for sunder read asunder.

- " 135, " 37, for float read afloat.
- " 149, " 35, for throng motley read motley throng.
- " 153, " 8, for Thou even, read Thou, even.
- " 187, " 11, for of disaccord; and Thou read of discord; and, Thou.
- " 188, " I, for For, comest read For, camest.
- " 194, " 7, for will be read will he.
- " 205, " 19, omit comma.
- " 213. " 26, insert of before fury.
- " 253. " 15, for Silenos's read Silenos'.
- " 266, " 31, for Zeus's read Zeus'.
- " 313. " 19, for leant read lent.



ORPHEUS TODAY

I.

O Orpheus, help! Too long, alas, hast thou been hence. Come, O come, and forthwith, irradiant child-like myth of the Golden Age, with the hallow'd influence over spirit and sense of oracular Song! Thee every generation hath closer drawn to the needs of the soul; Who canst assuage Man's grief at the world-old ill,and the inhuman curse of reasonless wont, and distrust of self-with the gleeful lay of deeds heroic, that comfort and thrill; Who, with glad-eyed vaticination of faith, the strange evils our hearts presage

Return, return unto us
with lyre immortal, and voice clear-ringing
of life-love and praise,
hymning all gods of the light; and cast
the spell victorioùs
of thy mystical singing
at last
over these latter days.

canst dissipate, and disperse.

II.

Hither from fields Elysian where droop and wither

no blossoms of fancy or gladsome whim, where doubt and sorrow no eyes bedim,hasten, Helper, and Freer with the gaze of the Seerthat deep interior vision, wotting the heart-sure manifold Truth of all things that be:-How thick we do press and crowd (wedged elbow in elbow, and knee against knee,) a tangle rank, clamped, twisted, and braced, humped, crooked, and bowed! How, greedily thrust, do our tap-roots pierce to the core of the parcht stone-waste! How our branches stretch greedily fierce in a jealous horror enlaced,fellow with fellow agrapple for the throttling hold that shall snakewise each-other enfold! O Orpheus, haste, for we choke at length (galled and knotted and gnurled, belichened, dry-rotten,) our stature misshapen and sapped our strength-Hear, hear, as we pray and plead, (all piteous shame of our plight forgotten.) We men of a dying world,-O Orpheus, Orpheus-hear us, and heed!

III.

For lo, thro' yon thickets dense, impassable to the children of Zeus, where never glad ray of the holy Sun, thy Father assaileth the shadows dim, or winds of heaven forth-drive from fetid haunts of monstrous use, pollution and pestilence;

What Beasts of the midnight foul, only with thirst of blood alive, stalk after their prey and prowl,—ghostlike efface them,—roar and howl, or crouch asnarl and askulk—

or cower for the sudden death-spring with claws and fangs and the down-crashing bulk!

O Orpheus, who hearest our cry behold with thy sunny eye the dens obscene where lair and whelp these devils of lust, in the womb of the shuddering gloom.

Deliverance and comfort bring, Orpheus, O Orpheus, help.

IV.

Heard hath the Singer as in the olden time, yea, in the golden time, our joyous Wisdom-bringer; and fulfilled is already the earth with subtle far echoings of the spirit-song jocund He sings. And everywhere lo, how men go forth as gods, with hearts of gods in their bosoms, and laughter of gods again in their eyes,sane, happy and wise! For gone of whatever departs is the baneful regret; the sickly hope of a bliss hereafter that crieth forever: "Not yet"; of futile things, which cumber and irk. the anguish vain and the fret; free of the mire, of the mirk, of the reek, that hinder and let; Above the Olympian outlook widesea, scarp, and hill and vale; above the Caucasus icy-vast of tortured Prometheän pride. For lo, in the spirit they come and they go, in the selfsame spirit of thy Song:-

No nigh, no far,—no future, no past no foul, no fair—no right, no wrong for such as they! All hail!

V.

Singer divine, First-born of the Muse, thou knewest our sorrow,or whence could it poignancy borrow that Song immortal of thine? Ah, She who the meaning showed of life beyond greed, beyond lust; in whose mystical eyes the prophecy glowed, of the holier rebirth forever of thee and of her, to a worth thou knewest in Her not, or thee:-(the thing ye would in the thing ye mustin the evil, the goodand the soul, in the dust;) Who translated brutish content to human unrest; to delight in the fiat creative; to beauty, and heavenly right;-Eurydice, Eurydice, She Mother of the spirit in thee, and Child likewise of thy singing-She went (her treasures of love unspent,) to Hades unreconciled. Yea. She bade thee the last farewell of the death-cold hand and starkof dumb lips and sightless lids that tell the uttermost word, unutterable speech of our longing. But Thou didst withstand undaunted the King of terrors dark. And manful, and godlike, to lovely life sangest her back from care and carkbeloved Mother and Child and Wife. Then, haste alas, overeager as man to possess what singer alone and seer can bless

the earth with, and sun,—did lose thee at last (one minute more thou hadst held Her fast!) the comforting human tones, and the rapture-giving touch, for which the bereaved heart groans—so little, yet ah, so much, so much! Wherefore, O thou Orpheus who knowest our woe, the peace of Elysium forego. On us have pity, even now, and thy pity deign to show. Son of Apollo, help!

VI.

For again is Eurydice dead, the most dear, and fair, and good; and our spirit to hers was wed, the holy vows were said, Yea, the child of her maidenhood Godbegotten, she bare unborn, in her heart! With what spell of prayer-Ah, what art magical, chaunt or dance compulsive, shall death be withstood of Us children of chance, bewildered and faint for despair? Have pity, have pity! Our spirit disbelieveth. O spare, spare us the bitter self-scorn that assaulteth us here forlorn. Have pity, have pity! To the eyes Her love did illumine, to the heart that vainly yearneth, the lust of the brute prehuman returneth, returneth. Have pity, have pity, have pity! The greed of the jungle doth grip the soil below the man in craft and wont; and our fellowship is: "Slay to live, who can!"

Have pity, have pity!

The heart of the desert noon is upon us, from tree-top to root; our manhood doth perish;—we swoon to the cringe and the leer of the brute. Have pity, have pity, have pity!

O Orpheus, Son of Apollo, help!

VII.

Singer, gentle, the Bacchants of yore did shout and yell and blaspheme. They fell upon thee and rent and tore, and, bleeding, cast thee down the fated stream. But thy blood was lost not; it ran into the veins of Man, and thy flesh is our flesh evermore! Arise, oh, arise from the dead, and take that is thine for thine own: our blood thy blood, who hast bled: our flesh thy flesh alone. Come and possess us, possess us; and the youth we have lost, alack, the hope, the love, the dream-to bless ussing us Eurydice back! Yea, yeaand the Forest of twofold greed doth awake; and the boughs of us tremble and sway,and our ancient trunks straighten them, lithe once more and freed,to the wind of thy melody brave. Footloose we move in a ring to thy jubilant rhythm, and blithe leap we, and bow, and wave, and whirl us unwearying. And the Beasts of the loathly night do stand up manful, at last, full height; and their evil glare about of innumerous eyes, to a shine

superhuman blend: the Eternal encircling the True without a beginning or end. Ha, hearken, we raise the shout:-"We are wholly, O Orpheus, thine! Thou, Thou hast sung us footloose from vile crafts and necessities base; talons to hands for sacred use. and snout deformed to the Kingly face. O Orpheus, gracious myth divine, now even now up the mountain's gradual slopes Thou hast sung us free, and gentle, and pure; Thou hast sung us to natural faiths and hopes; Thou hast sung us to godly loves secure; Thou hast done it, Thou alone, Thou! Thou hast sung us back the lost ideal, Thou hast sung Eurydice back to life, Thou hast sung the mystical hymeneal of maiden Mother and Child and Wife. Hearken our vow, O Orpheus, Singer and Seer, Cheer-bringer, and Freer, We are thine, we are thine forever now!"

THE SOUL'S WIZARDRIES

Natural magic!

Lo, ooze and slime of the marsh sunsmit to glory?
So, likewise the slayer's cell (in a world hopeless and harsh what miracle!)
lifted by mystic blisses of penance far above abysses of lurid hell,

a cloud-pure promontory—
the mighty hand and the outstretched arm!
So, the harlot's bed, and lewd love-token
(Mark how it wins—the spell,
the serene charm
faithfully spoken!)
thro' a divine devotion
hallowing death,
become—(who shall believe it?)
white moonrise over sleeping ocean,—
or, if thou canst conceive it:—
a close-veiled holy of holies,
whereat the haloed saint his orison saith
awe-humbled, under breath.

Magic, white magic! Our brutish strife and crime offering this gross-gorged time soul's bread of anguish tragic, for spirit to taste gracious and chaste! Shames now, and doltish follies;-thereafter transmuted to a bubbling draught of laughter! The craven fears ignoble of man, waxen, at touch of Pan, terrific; the craft of the thrall and malice throneth aloft sublime a hate Satanic. The hideous doth upbulk to a threat Titanic, and the loathly dwarfeth to the grim grotesque and odd;distilled, as fire-drop in the reeking chalice that changeth to opaline wine the blood, till the eyes of love with marvel dim, for heavenly gladness swim!

Ha, ever the wraith of the bygone faith haunteth the mart

of the commonplace.

O child, then, of the highest God, take heart, take heart of grace.

Thou too wert begotten and born Olympian. Lift thine head.

Nevermore weak, forlorn, down-drooping to the dead, earth's outcast, shalt thou pant!

For, presently Jove nods assent to thine unbreathed petition.

Thine the omnipotent fiat of gods, and all thy dross already gold, pure gold!

See, see!

(What holy gladness,—
wisdom, not madness!)

Thou too mayest be
high hierophant
divine magician!

DAY DREAMS

A forest there is. Dreams are its trees where branches lock with leafage dense, to screen in gloom trunks grey or dusk, and a lavish floor of green intense. And over the roof that shelters these quick sunbeams foot a reckless reel, stamping in golden glee, to crack their floor if possible, and feel the cool of the green gloom under (see!) in which swim birds of curious hues (as in some river fishes dart) but entrance ever the leaves refuse. A forest of dreams, all dreamed by me, familiar, strange, and dear, most dear, with wonders old I know by heart and wonders new too fair to fear!

Oft do I wander through its shades alone, or hand in hand with One whose name I never sought to know, because I fancy she hath none. Look! how the forest knee-high wades in hope's fresh sea of shrubbery! She, laughing ever, as we goher laughter's notes mount merrily their sprightly scale, till from each tree some bird-voice whirls the laughter higher! Then throbs the forest: peal on peal of thunder muiscal. How tire of such a senseless jubilee? For every tree-top hides a nest by two wed wishes built, to seal with a new better love their best. Wild wishes build them nests, I say, in boughs of my dream-trees, and burstwhenever she (my nameless One) chances to laugh, in song. Well-versed in all the tricks a syren may practice, bewildering whoso hears, my Witch (whom never saw the sun, born of the dim cool) slyly peers with eyes (their color can I tell, that dartle all?) into each thick of undergrowth for certain flowers, which, finding, she stoops her down to pick. Then falls upon her from the air a frolic band of sunbeams slyher hair-sent by the merry sun forbidden forest-shades to spy! Why doth she pick them, do you ask? For me, of course. All which I take back with me to the world without, when for a brief space I forsake my forest of dreams; - and we, we both, She and I, we wonder why they bloomthose flowers like her own lips' sweet poutif to be plucked their hapless doom!

O forest dear! O forest oldmy own, none other's! O dear trees that are not trees,-dear songster birds that are not birds,-O sweetest, these flowers, not flowers-but joys foretold plucked by that One who hath no name,let me be silent, lest my words give you perchance a fatal fame; lest greedy men, who hear my tale, with brutal axe fare forth by stealth and fell my forest, trunk by trunktimber to get them vulgar wealth! Mad call they me? Dear Soul, all hail their mocks and sneers at our romance for so our treasure is safely sunk in the river of men's ignorance!

TO A LATTERDAY PROPHET

(WHO CAME LATE, AND WENT FORTH TOO SOON)

He came to us with soul on fire, he came to us from the East with light: we heard, we saw; and God drew nigher, and wrong was wrong, and right was right.

He went forth from among us then.

All soon would be as ere he came;
for men, we murmured, are but men,
and the world's ways for aye the same!

Ah, who that clomb the heights serene in sleep, can after quite forego the vision? gainsay, that once hath seen, its glory; and the known unknow?

For His sake life hath holier worth, our faith made sure—whate'er we are that still our man-corrupted Earth shines in God's firmament—a star!

OUR MOTHER OF LIFE

What other heaven than this should heart desire in azure nudity, or cloudy flow defining godlike dreams invisible else? What other star than ours, of shiny seas, of continents in waves of green spring-clad, with chains of diamond ice-peaks loosely decked gathered to flashing heaps at either pole? While here we lie, Love, under laughing trees, can we not feel the sway of happy earth as on she flies enhaloed of her day, and followed by her train of soft-starred night?

O foolish perverts from the natural faith, insane, awake! Ye deemed it wise to sow in fields of mist, sun-golden at the dawn, the seeds of hope? Ye wailed when ye beheld only at sunset on the verge of night wave a far crop of faiths illusively which death might harvest, but no living man? So in your bitterness of heart ye cried: "Blessed are they that live not, for they reap with death wide fields of bliss"? Arise! arise, ye perverts, if ye have ears to hear. Wait for no general resurrection. Throng from self-dug graves of sorrow, and behold The symbol: Life a crowing Babe in arms of tender Mother Death, whose proud fond eyes remember and foresee-whose bosom swells with rich provision for the hungry mouth! A little sleep, and in the Babe we crowa little sleep, and in the Mother smile; and between sleep and sleep-a lover's kiss!

What other life? What other love? What truth truer than this—that Spring hath bloom and song? And Summer holy heat, and flutter of wings? And Autumn ripe fruit—heavy, luscious, red—

and flights through sky into the warm unknown? And Winter white dreams of a whiter Spring?

Ah, they, that love as we, are never alone! Even here, as smile lights smile for intimate joy that we are denizens of this living earth, behold, our Holy Mother immaculate draweth near softly-smileth on us both. Thou seest not her face? The shadow vague of the glad trees about us-'t is the drift of ample robes over the twinkling grass for vital bliss ashiver-knowing her. She walketh viewless through the shining day, she seeketh them who seek her not-her breath is on thy happy hair! Her large deep eyes give thine a haze of rapture that they seem, tho' fixed on me, to look, Love, far away into the heart of heavenly delights! Thou seest her now? That rapturous thrill of fearit is thy soul aware of her spread arms fain to envelop us with yearning love. We yearn not, for we have.

O Mother, soon, soon shall we come to thee, who were of thee, who bless thee filially, though now we strive against thee, lest thou fold us to thy heart ere yet we have done with play. But sweet it is to know what breast shall pillow us in sleep when tired at last.

See, see! Life's God is nigh,—
thy Son of laughter and heroic toils,
Him we acknowledge in thy holy stead,
not holier, but dearer unto us,
and dear to thee, thy very Son, thy self,
to whom thou gavest us, to be his own!
O thou wilt punish not who hold by him,
loyally his, not thine; with fervent soul
worshiping him, crying the jubilant cry

before his coming, dumb at thy approach—for thou art he!

Look, Love, behold him come!

The locust trees are dancing in vast winds of joy, dropping bloomsnows from clusters pure over the frolic grass about us. There, the lilac bushes catch the breeze, and leap, wave with green arms their spires of blossoms pale like maddened bacchants full of sunny wine, shaking the cruel thyrsis for the God!

Birds burst together into reckless song till the air throbs with obstinate wild notes of ecstasy; the blue of heaven pours in as the trees overhead lift high their boughs and meet atop applauding frantically.

Close, close! The whole world thrills with the coming kiss.

Not peace—war, war! Only the victors live and bloom and sing!

The vanquished,—where are they? Ah, from the Mother's eyes they beam their love, on us the Victory of their battles lost, Crest of their wave,—the spray, the flare of hues!

O kiss, Love, let us kiss and kiss again, so shall the God of Life be visible to eyes of rapturous faith—for he is Love. And Mother Death that instant shall rejoice—for she is Love, as he, her Son, is Love.

What Mother must not laugh when crows her Babe!

ODE IN SAPPHICS

(Sung at the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Cincinnati Literary Club)

Sing the good Old Days that are gone forever, rich in friendship, love; and for sturdy virtue, honest purpose, faith, and heroic action, sweet to remember.

Half a hundred years of success and failure: earth and sky and sea are the same, and little change the ways of men; the beholder only ages and passes.

Wherefore mourn, sweet friends, or despond or marvel? Still the New Days come—for the Maker liveth—young and fresh and bold, and the cry is ever upward and onward!

Past and future meet in the vital present; thankfulness and trust in a pure emotion, making wise the young, and the old courageous, singing together:—

Sweet the good Old Days to recall and cherish; sweet the good New Days to forecast and welcome; sweet the tried, the known; and the fresh surprises sweetly delightful!

Yea, for pain and grief to the brave and noble yield a pure joy, yield a reward of virtue: faith in life, death, God, and in man, our brother, ever, forever!

DON JUAN

Ten hundred lives I live, why then should this life chain me? When scores of hearts men take and give, wherefore should this heart pain me?

A myriad snaring eyes, white breasts, rare maiden graces? Things to be wooed and won! With lies?—Nay, She all else effaces.

One still, tho' manifold? True, true. Her heart I singled? Love's sun rode high in skies of gold—then, waves and clouds commingled.

Grope, press thro' the soul's thick gloom to reach that fiend? Entangle the traitor self? Make fast his doom? Clutch, crunch, and grind and strangle?

God, who hath wronged her? I? Slay thou that man, the doer! Shall for the dead the living die? Long dead is he—her wooer!

IDENTITY

O soul-mutation! When are we one thing? Do you know, Love, even now, as I looked up from this grim book of far-off times, you seemed a stranger; and suddenly upon a stage of half-real vision, I beheld this scene enacted in the quiet of our home.

A man who bore strong likeness to myself so that to me he seemed me, sat and read intently; and near him leaned a lady, fair— I cannot tell how fair and dear she seemed—

as you to me . . . and, verily she was you. She came to him, saying he was estranged, not loverlike. Angrily he looked up. . . . bewildered rather. "And, tell me who art thou?" he asked. "I know there has not been in me a change. I ever was as now I am." And you seemed smit with a fell fear of something undefined. A keen long look,—half scorn, half plea—you sent. Abashed at my harsh words (which yet seemed true) to one so beautiful, I added "Nay, I dreamed perhaps, fair lady, of a brow with dark hair circled so; but how could I to a dream-creature vow away the love of the waking man, the dreamer never knew?" And you at me looked steadily, nor winced. Then flashed a recognition.—"Am I mad? This, this I had forgotten! It was you? And I? You for long years I wooed, and won, and kissed, and wedded? God, was I gone mad? It was a veritable thing, no dream,that beautiful love? Ah, how to seize the soul and fetter it fast in manacles of faith? For hearken, Dear, even now I thought myself alone, purposeless, heavenless,-and with you close at my side! I am myself again . . . sweet friend and sweeter Love, I am myself; I am the lover dreamed of these long years, . . . ay, anything lest I be all alone. and those dear eyes that are God's eyes to me, fill with tears angrily. My Sweet, my Love, O that a moment could have sundered so my spirit from thine, whose I must ever be!

A whim of fancy was it? Yet, alas a parable of truth. I love thee now, yet, darling, what assurance can I give? I cannot swear. I, uttering the words, am other than the framer of their thought. I am another than thy yesterday's, must woo again another soul afresh. . . .

Yet love, Love, is the same (though we be changed) the bond that binds these many into one.

O love—love! God, we cannot! Bind us fast,
Thou who alone art truly ever thou!

ONE SLEEP

Tho' now each dreams his dream alone and the soul's beloved in hell may weep, while the lover laughs in a heaven of his own; there shall be (I have heard) at last—one sleep!

"Till death us do part?" Who never here are one? Nay, rather, till death unite beyond all separate hope and fear, or both with dreamless torpor smite!

Twain have we been and still are twain for all love's anguishful desire! Ah, welcome ages of infinite pain if thence we leap,—one flame of fire!

For the mystery whispereth in my heart from holiest height, from lowliest deep:—
"Heaven is—where thou forever art; one vision—awake . . . and one dream—asleep!"

THE ECHOES

I.

THE DREAM BIRD

In a dream, last night, I saw my heart from a leafless brier as a Bird upstart to fling him eagerly aloft, o'er rain-wet garth and steeming croft, o'er grim stone-fence and blackthorn hedge,—unlured of the free horizon-edge,—

up, up from damp and drizzle and thaw . . . as a Hill-lark-methought my heart I saw. And ever in fitful loops he flew, or mounted in spires to the quiet blue; outleaping the walls, the winds upbuild of toppling radiancies sun-thrilled; thro' golden dazzle, on, higher and higher to where bliss upholdeth the wings of desire. By the hush and solitude undeterred, poised on the vast, alone, wee Bird, quick atom of hope and faith and might. possessing the heaven in voiceless delight, what aileth thee, now? Art insecure Lord of the still, the sunny, the pure? Alas, as a fluttering flake of snow falls from a cloud to the valley below; falling, then striving to rise again, dreading pollution in footprints of men; falling and rising, yet surely bound for some low spot of the pitiless ground; so, fell my Soul-and unseen, unheard, hopeless and songless had vanished my Bird.

II.

EARLY SPRING

Rain-swollen creeks invaded the low glades with pool and bog. Bare hickories and white oaks waded in stealthy drifts of fog.

The ghostly drip and patter of the thaw;—else never a sound, save now and again the clatter of a dead branch dropping to ground.

Lo, where my Dream-bird clinging to you topmost beechen spray setteth the drear woods ringing with a passionate dismay! What fellow and mate abideth in the dumb and cold unknown? to hear and heed when He chideth and waileth and calleth alone?

Yet if none be won of his wooing with warble and gurgle and trill, 't is the cry of a soul's undoing,—the rapture and ache that kill.

大き

III.

THE MATE

Why tarrieth she so late in sun-parched clime? Or would not my Dream-bird wait for the trysting-time?

Doth She not hearken, and 'bide in the covert, and yearn for pity, and throbbing pride, till the note he learn

of despair, that enraptureth and maketh her his? . . . for the life, begot in the death of the dream that is?

Ay, She panteth in hope and fear lest he sing too late the song that slayeth to hear, and doth, slaying, create?

Speak, speak—doth she hearken somewhere in the cheerless cold, for that shout of divine despair, of love unconsoled?

Or, is there None at all in the woodland drear?—
None, None his passionate call, his complaint to hear?

TV.

THE DEATH-SONG

Methought a hundred Echoes sang, as louder the song of my Dream-bird rang. They caught his catches, the tricksy elveshow should it tire their soulless selves? For the pang of his strain, not theirs to feel. Ouaver, and trill, and jubilant peel, sob, and moan, and piteous crythey followed and mocked, now far, now nigh. They seemed, as fainter his notes became to gather might for their merciless game. My Dream-bird paused in his song; and aghast he heard the echoes throb far and fast. He deemed them rivals for her he wooed. and rallied his strength in valiant mood. A burst of melody skyward floatsa glorious tempest of passionate notes. But in vain the agonizing strain the shout, the call, and the sob in vain. For the Echoes singing and laughing go; they do not feel, they cannot know! They only follow, and mimick, and mock from hollow and height, from tree and rock. At last he is still. His spirit is spent. And the echoes jeeringly lament. But the cruel mockers die after him soon. and the drear woods ache in a death-cold swoon. In tears I awoke at the chill gray dawn. My heart, the Bird and the dream-were gone.

DREAM AND WAKING

(A Bridal-Poem in Seven Lyrics and Prelude)

SUNSET PRELUDE

Emptied of wine the bowl of blinding blaze, wherewith the Day, that died as die proud days, Eve's dusk and starlight pledg'd; the daisy-suns have gather'd in their rays snow-luminous, rosy-edg'd.

Eve held her mist-blue cup brimful of rest, gray sleep, and silver dreams, and wishes blest, to challenge His, aloft:—
both cups clasht—shiver'd, inundating the West, with slumberous passion soft.

Into the sea of Night, Day's wine hath poured, stain'd it a moment—then gloom-billows roar'd and foam'd and blacken'd all.

O sea of Night, vague, vast and silent-shor'd, death-torpid thy billows fall!

I.

AN OLD NEST

Frail boughs of precious sprays, that twine and press sweet blossoms cheek to cheek, why, when no wayward breath essays to tangle itself in your bright maze, so tremulous? Speak, bright branches, speak.

"A nest lies hidden here an old year's nest through winter safely kept; and happy boughs are we, for we're of all the bloomy boughs most near where innocent birds last summer slept!

Two wayfarers are flown
back to the nest of merry months gone-by;
and nestle wing to wing, unknown
of all the world save us alone,
and twitter in sleep, and dream they fly."

A MOCKING-BIRD

A charm
lies closely over all;
no harm
can any soul befall.
So dark,
so still, O lovely night . . .
But hark,
what heavenly-sweet affright?

Burst, rise, irrepressible song!

To hearken—'t is to die,
to float away amid a wild-wing'd throng—
ecstatic notes—into the thrilling sky.

Rush waves, of impassion'd sound till stars the dark abyss enkindle; till ye flood us forth, and, drown'd, cast us on shores remote of heaven's still bliss!

III.

THE OLD IDEAL

O boyish
Delight,
why haunt me
to-night?

Forgotten almost, . . . yea, merely a ghost—

- a misty
 moongleam,
 a fancy,
 a dream,
- a vision that with dawn must fade and be gone!

THE BRIDE ASLEEP

No power hast Thou at all
on Her, my Bride.
Thou couldst enthrall
the youth that long since died,
never the man Thou darest here to haunt,—
Wraith of the past, Spirit of ill, avaunt!

.

She dreams of me . . . She breathes
upon my breast . . .
my hand ensheathes
Her little hand . . . 'T were best
never to wake when dreams are over-dear,—
never to wake—ever to slumber here.

V.

.

EVOCATION

What weird dream have I dream'd hard to recall?
Ay! so meseem'd
I stood in some vast hall lonely and sad, a disillusioned youth loathing the lie—fearing the face of truth.

All the life since, became unreal; yes, She a myth, a name.

I yearn'd to bow the knee, reverent to some strange Deity, my own Creature-of-cloud, Witch-of-my-dreams unknown.

There mov'd unheard, but felt,
a shining Thing,
whose either wing
cover'd me as I knelt:—
"Vision of perfect being, holy, sweet,
let me remain—perish, but kiss thy feet!"

APPARITION AND EXORCISM

Face, white
'neath infinite night,
eyes, full of love and light,—
a mystic spell;
lips, rose
as dawn-lit snows,
quiver, then tightly close,
lest of their love too soon they tell;

soft gleams
of neck, dim dreams
of shoulders, arms, 'neath streams
of tumbling gloom:
Love's form
divine! A storm
of passion shakes me. Warm
with thy warm Self my ice-cold tomb!

Nay, Thou,
art even now
another's, for thy brow
my suit condemns;
and yet . . .
What snare is set—
shining and dewy-wet,
of grasses woven and daisy-stems?

Ensnar'd?
Nay,—who hath dar'd
to bind Night's Queen dark-hair'd
with mesh on mesh?
to throw
webs, silken, aglow
with dew-pearls, o'er thy snow—
stars gather'd in heaven's garden fresh?

Why rend
from end to end
those Eastern curtains? Bend
o'er me, strange Queen!
Thy face
hath lost its grace?
Fly, Siren, fly this place—
Some foe destroyeth thee unseen.

The sun!
The morn begun!
The stars blown out each one!
Day's diadems
flash bright.
The Witch-of-night,
the Siren moony-white
hath vanish'd in a flare of gems!

VII.

THE BRIDE AWAKE

Awake are the birds, awake is my heart, forgotten the words which made Night's magical spell but now;

and happier am I,
for near me Thou art;
so sweet and so shy,
my Bride! Truth sweeter than Dreams
art Thou!

THE HAWK

(A Ballad of Dawn in Colloquy)

I.

First voice-

SUNRISE PRELUDE

The Morn hath tiptoe stolen near to Night and cast her upon him in love's delight!

Second voice-

Their arms enlac'd, their warm close lips have met, her hair all unknotted—'t is twilight yet!

First voice-

With her pale Self she covers him. She seems to lie like a snowdrift above his dreams.

Second voice-

White shines She, naked 'mid her golden hair, and smiles as He dies—for the Day is there!

II.

Third voice-

THE PIGEON

A Pigeon flies. Lo, it darts! it rocks in air, till the plumes of its wings meet behind—till the Foe is lost! But who can share my joy? Who sing it forth? Oh! ne'er to be gifted for utterance—doom unkind!

III.

First voice-

THE LARK

Far up from the green of the field, from the gold of the sunlit river, from graves where mourners have kneel'd, from boughs with their sparkle of beads ashiver, up into the chalice of dawn—from th' eye of night in the lily of day, forth of his nest—is the Lark upgone on his steep, clear, song-pav'd way.

Up, into the sky is he fled,
where the blue and the calm dwell ever,
where sounds of struggle are dead:
he hath vanquish'd its summit with wings' endeavor.
Then, shake out thy shower of notes!
The veins of silence with melody pulse.
Sing, little Lark, from thy throat of throats!
With thy joy heaven's heart convulse!

IV.

THE HAWK

Second voice-

A shadow!—a Foe—a scream! a shudder—grim claws fiend's beak—keen eyes that gleam! a flash—a pause.

A pitiful scream to hear—
a rush to the sky—
the Foe beneath!—no fear—
a triumph-cry!

V.

THE PAEAN

Both voices-

Shout, shout, that the Fiend hath misst his prey! Mad song, ring out exultantly!

Thrill! Thrill!
In the heaven's great deep-blue eye,
bask thee, and still
sing, sing, on high!

Third voice THE VOICELESS TRIUMPH

O Lark! my soul was rescued from its foe but it knew not thy voicing occult that can utter glee, and heavenward throw the blissful soul to God! I glow with the fire of thy triumph. Exult! Exult!

All voices and echoes-

Exult!

HIGHER MATHEMATICS

Two and two make five, say I!
This truth is as plain as day. For why?
The whole is more than the sum I take
of the parts;
thoughts, feelings, passions, do not make
human hearts;
sums are not wholes
with flowers and souls!
So two and two make five, say I!

WISHES

What, Love, our toddling baby would be an angel bright?
Ha! The white-winged angel, maybe would be baby,—if he might!

Would the rock—be the plashing river that to the salt sea flows?
Or the river—the poplar aquiver in the wind at even-close?

Would the rose be a moonrise lily, or the lily a sunset rose? Then why We so foolish silly? Woe's me that no man knows.

A FATHER'S MEMORY

O, ho! my baby Bacchant (Just three-years-old!) Hop-skipping with fresh-cut thyrsis o'er the dewy, briery wold; a bright crown above her ringlets of dandelion gold;

left hand—clutching blackberries—squeezes and squirts their juice; white frock leopard-spotted, thorn-tattered to ribbons wind-loose; and mouth choke-full of laughter too crimson for human use!

Blessèd, blessèd Apparition from years long long gone by, come dancing prancing hither, side-glancing, with wreath awry, advancing the leaf-tipped thyrsis, out-shouting the Bacchic cry!

For my heart and mind hang heavy, and my body's eye droops dull.
Wild brier-roses? Fierce briers dew-berried?
Little hands their glories to cull? . . .
Haste hither, O haste hither, my Girlie,
Time's decree with thy smile to annul!

For still I know that thou skippest and hoppest for eager glee down the path to the ivied cabin, calling shrilly for "Mamma" to see . . . And 't is I—I only am banished the old world of thy wee witchery : . .

While you,—you can scarce remember, . . . puzzled, shamefast, as I speak. "Oh, Father, dear, how silly!" . . .

And yet, ah, willy-nilly, I seek in day-dream, yea, and in night-dream to kiss that chubby cheek;

snatch the dimpled wriggler proudly in greed beyond her ken; clutch, squeeze juice-oozing fingers, cram full the red mouth, and then toss passionately, ay, toss her to skyward again, and again and again!

SELFISH GRIEF

"Lost! Lost!" Writhing with grief on God I cried that He would grant me once, but once, to see my Darling's face;—when lo, I woke, heart-free, whirled in a heavenward eddy's spiral wide, sucked up of hymns angelical. Blue-eyed on river's bank, screaming for childish glee, with happy playmates. . . . Yea, I know 't is he! From stone to stone he leapt to the farther side, over his golden locks a quick look cast, and darted into glory shut from sight. "Son, only the torrent of selfish tears men shed, impassable, sundereth, (swift-glistering past thy feet) love's hope from utmost love's delight!" "What comfort, God, if still my child be dead?"

ADRIFT

Drift!
Who would care to lift
the cast-off rose
from the stream's traitorous breast?
No one knows
whose it was—where it bloomed—
Only, doomed—doomed—doomed—
It is best—
drift!

THE TWIN POPLAR

(A Summer Night's Revery)

Among the mob of clover (their wee hoary heads nodnodding to the wavy sod—)

we lie

You and I

by the placid cool lagoon.

Above us-the pale sky over-

fluffed flocks of gleamy cloudlets flee-

from the radiance keen

of the enhaloed moon.

And shrubberies, fantastically free,

exuberant tree-masses, loose and large,

(Us and the sky's earth-touch between,)

pile them along the farther marge,

and fitfully pant in the wind and swerve and sway.

And thro' their midst, away, away

lo, a forth-streaming wide . . .

(athwart,

to where the arched span of the bridge is

for phantom feet . . .)

an animate hither-thither fair and fleet

of dazzling shimmer

in wayward sport

that dieth soon

to a ghostly glimmer

against the hazy world-end ridges

beneath the allhallowing haloed moon.

And somehow, Dear,

hearkening, meseems I hear

the laughter faint of ripply lips. . . .

And thine eyes and mine converge

(Hark, the dew from the trailing lilac drips!)

involuntarily upon you tall twin Poplar grey

in the invisible spirit urge

now blessedly one, now twain again

as for rapturous lover's play. . . .

(What subtle fragrance wafted over maketh breathing delicious pain?

Or is it close about us, the honey-clover nod-nodding sweet-gossipwise to the glistenings and grass-lispings of the sod?)

Ha! How yon Poplar doth thine eyes and mine fascinate—mirk-rooted, ghost-sure in mystery, where the living shimmer fadeth dimmer and doth grope to feel of the misty sward slope. . . .

whom thou givest no wealth of love so! . . .)

(Dear God, how pitifully poor

For lo, lo! into the vague, the Poplar lifteth you cloven shadowthen anon-still, still very, very silvery, together glideth one forever and the same. Dreamed have we the silence that requireth no speech. Such marrying of pure body and lofty soul as inspireth the play of twain-each in eachever free, ever whole: such lifting up foregathered into the lightsuch rooting down-deep, deep by effulgent waters, watch eternally to keep nigh the bridge whose mystic span bindeth Eden to Eden, man to man. . . . Love still is gracious, tenderly heart-single. . . .

(Ha! the wicked titter of silly leaves in the gust overhead—the cynical glitter in the moon too cruelly unveiled. . . . That we failed that our high noon of youth is dead!

The clover noddles wag and wag, part and meet, and ripples mocking wink nag and brag at the brink by our feet. . . .)

Love still is gracious, tenderly heart-single tho' from his dizzy heights perhaps he hath suffered his proud soaring ways to lapse to some bloom-dingle of shy oblivious sweetnesssome glow-glad cottage ingle where petty joys commingle to a comforting completeness. . . . But this ache, ah, this ache! what tho' all this shamefast while (Not thy smile can the spell, Dear, of unearthly wonder break!) We against love who unaware have sinned, we, on the hither bank of the lagoon prove the illusion—to be dissipated soon; and yonder, We, unwittingly we, our very Selves wave in the wind, uplifted from the grey-green of the gloom for the play of spirit; in quest of freer roomyea, the still moon-silvery scope of a mysterious imperious holy hope?

Who knoweth which we truliest be

(O glory that forth floweth!

O fragrant wind that bloweth!)
the soul in flesh we feel not, or the soul in dream we see?

Who knoweth tonight, who knoweth?

PARENTAL CONSENT

"You will live to have love-love-love?" Love, did you say? Ah, little child, do you understand what thing you ask? A period of happy dreams and hopespoetic imaginings,like bees thro' bloomy paradises a-wing in the sun, gathering the honey to store in their hivethe soul of the beloved . . . for the world to rob to the din of its creeds? Say rather, you want illusion first, and then-ah, disillusion; patient efforts. cruel efforts to revive the dead, recall the forgotten. You want delicious dependence dear to alternate with fierce despair of freedom;-alas! surrender yourself you do not dare, nor can you wholly withhold yourself! You want, I know, disappointments, griefs together borne; and vexations also that part sunder utterly soul from soul;--woes, shames, pitiful sorrows for which each blames the other, tho' both be innocent: of which either blames himself in secret, tho' both be guilty. Ah, child, my own sweet, smiling child, I still can see the little babe-(You cannot, for you have forgotten that babe)you want to know life now, death, the agonies, hazards, and blisses incommunicable? Ay, you are right,

none will deny it:to be gloriously miserable at the worst, is better than the common content of day after day, in which one knows not the strength of the soul, and forgets there is heaven and hell. You are right. "To live for love only-for love and for love!" It is foolish, I think? Yes, and wise also, my child, very wise. We, your elders, who once were foolish as you, would not have you wiser, God knowsonly more foolish, maybe, tho' our heart must ache with your ache. Oh, to be foolish again as you, more foolish and wiser so! Therefore we will weave you the bridal wreath, we will smile gaily, but of you unheard, in our hearts (forgive us, for who can help misgivings and bodings?) the bell shall toll away, toll to the peal of joy-the sobbing knell for us of our child. . . . The child whom often in dreams I see by ocean beach, toy-pail and spade in hand, little dress tucked up-bare legs, chubby feet splash-splash in the foam of the spent green surf! The bell shall toll the knell of memories, hopes fulfilled. But you shall hear notonly for you the happy peal, and the cries "God bless you, God bless you!" And-God bless you indeed, tho' cur eyes fill with tears while we tell you how happy we are that you-have love!

THE WIDOWER

A respite grant, Love, if no dear relief;
lest maddened by this torturing fell Woe
I perish not, but work thine overthrow
of whom he holdeth right and might in feof.
O Love, my Lord, of caitiffs am I chief
on whom thou dost such guerdon misbestow;
the spirit's extreme ordeal to undergo!
Shall grief slay—whoso slew not thee and grief?

I cannot hearken now her wooing voice, be rapt in her embraces safe and close; in vain with her thou biddest me rejoice, downtethered here 'mid sensual things and gross! Disloyal to the past—or maimed, morose? Nay, canst thou offer Love, no holier choice?

THE BEECHES OF FERN BANK

I.

FELLOWSHIP

O beeches, dear Fern Bank beeches,
I greet you in haste as I pass.
How vast, still, and tender your reach is
over the wavy grass!
Your boughs (droop they moveless, or stir they,
soft-swaying in the summery air,)
are inviting me—all unworthy—
your fellowship true to share.

O beeches, dear Fern Bank beeches, men may envy your vigor and grace: for, grown great in your brotherhood, each is content with his ancient place; not restive as We and ambitious, with our fate perversely at strife.

What better, dear trees, can ye wish us than with You—to live our life?

O beeches, dear Fern Bank beeches, a consecrate grove ye are, for Dantes and chaste Beatrices in the glimmer of the twilight star; for memories, ecstatical fancies alone in the mid of the night; not bann'd from your shadow romance is, or Utopian devotion to right!

O beeches, dear Fern Bank beeches, calm warders of river and road, persuasive your whispered speech is,—with You will I make mine abode; and study as You to stand quiet upreaching to heaven in prayer for this beautiful Earth, so nigh it, while fondling its undulant hair!

II.

FAREWELL

Gleams the moon in the Fern Bank beeches!
How each mystic shadow reaches
down the softly grey-green slopes
of dew-wet grass!
Ah, my heart, my heart is aching—
hurt by dread of a long leave-taking,
for the ghosts of happy hopes
on the night wind pass.

Dreams the moon in the Fern Bank beeches? hark, how intimate their speech is, meant for none but loving ears to comprehend: wistfully they query whether quite in vain we've lived together, shared our longings, fancies, fears—that all should end?

Nay, old stalwarts, ancient beeches, though my soul your help beseeches, nought can Ye to stay the course of human fate.

Blessèd Ye, that here forever rooted rise with no endeavor, knowing no regret, remorse, no doubt, no hate!

Ah, how gracious each to each is, hallowed fellowship of beeches by the gleaming river bank at watch, and ward!

Would the human friend and lover might your magic spell discover, getting, giving holy thank in sweet accord!

Your close bonds not death can sever, faith and hope will fail you never, earth beneath, and sky above, green hills around; blessèd, blessèd Fern Bank beeches! Us—'t is loss alone that teaches how to make with wealth of love our life abound.

TO THE TWO LITTLE LADIES

CLARA SYLVIA

AND

PHOEBE

FOR WHOM THE STORY OF THE DEWDROPS WAS ORIGINALLY "MADE UP"

BE THE THING NOW DONE INTO RIME

MOST LOVINGLY DEDICATED

BY THEIR PLAYFELLOW

THE DEWDROPS

"WHERE MORE IS MEANT THAN MEETS THE EAR"

A PHANTASY

IN TWO TABLEAUX AND THIRTEEN SCENES

BEING AN ENTERTAINMENT FOR BIG FOLKS BY LITTLE PEOPLE

GIVEN IN ALAMEDA AT CHRIST CHURCH FALL FESTIVAL, 1905

SYNOPSIS

Tableau I. The Death of the Drops

N. B.—Trees at Right and Left. The Oak, Elm, and Beech are grouped at back of stage. Across Center stage, back, a tinsel web is hung on the branches. The Drops — Green, Blue, Red, Golden, and Violet—are grouped before it as though hanging there. The Spider is above the web at Right.

N. B.—Trees at Right Scene I.—The Fairy Queen causes the Dew to appear by the and Left. The Oak, magic of her Pansy.

Scene II.—The Dewdrops, laughing in the meshes of a huge spiderweb, beg the Moon to abide with them forever.

Scene III.—They are amazed at the appearance of flying things like stars of heaven, or themselves, the stars of earth; and the Ghostmoth explains their nature.

Scenc IV.—The Spider, hypocrite, ascetic, sensualist, in whose Web the Dewdrops hang, invokes the Wind to rid him of their noxious presence.

as though hanging Scene V.—The Trees discourse of the Wind's coming, and the there. The Spider is Ghostmoth bids them a last adieu.

Scene VI.—The Wind of Death blows to the terror of the Dewdrops, but the Golden Drop and the Blue Drop are full of faith, and leap down from the Web of Life.

Scene VII.—The Droplets, into which the falling Dewdrops broke, sing their gleeful Hymn of New Life.

Tableau II. The Doom of the Dew

moved, and the hedge appears to the rear across the stage. Flowers are grouped to right and left, a dead branch of an oak comes over the hedge, on which the Treetoad may squat.

N.B.—The web is re. Scene VIII.—The Droplets rejoice, arousing the wrath of the moved, and the hedge appears to the rear across the stage.

Scene VIII.—The Droplets rejoice, arousing the wrath of the Trectoad (professional prophet of evil, iconoclast, and materialistic cynic), and, growing to drops in the increasing dusk, they overhear the Wisdom of the Trees.

Flowers are grouped Scene IX.—The Dewdrops, thus comforted, sing of the Unseen to right and left, a Glory; whereupon the Treetoad bursts into such fierce railing dead branch of an that all the Dewrops faint for horror.

Scene X.—Toward dawn they recover consciousness, and are startled and gladdened by the little optimist, the Wren.

Scene XI.—Fearing, and hoping, the day begins; the flowers appear in new color; the Ruby-throat assures them the Sun is a flower, but they prefer to believe him a vast Dewdrop, and are edified greatly by the Vision of Last Things, vouchsafed to the Golden Drop.

Scene XII.—Gradually drawn up into the warm air, their spirits sing a heavenly rapture of Assumption.

Scene XIII.—The Fairy Queen comes forth in the front of the stage as Epilogue to gladden the folk in the pit with thoughts of their own eternal childhood of soul, while the attendant fays and fairies engage in a ballet of pantomime.

TABLEAU I. THE DEATH OF THE DEWDROPS

SCENE I. THE ENCHANTMENT

(Enter Fairy Queen, in front of Tableau Curtain. Takes C. stage, waving wand, and speaking a spell.)

Fairy Queen:

O the dew, the dew, on sprig and spray! on tendril, frond, blade, petal, plume—

Fay Chorus (invisible):

blinking and winking to swing and sway of moonrise sheen and cool perfume.

Fairy Queen:

O the dew, the dew, in hallowed hush of the hovering haze and mystery born—

Fay Chorus (invisible):

blinking and winking from leafage lush, from moss-strand, silken web and thorn.

(Enter Fay Chorus, softly, on tip-toe from R. and L.)

Fairy Queen:

To the wafts of verbena and heliotrope, to the whiffs of orange-bloom and musk,

Fay Chorus (dancing lightly):

big grow the dewdrops for glee and hope, in shimmer and glimmer and humid dusk.

(A moment of silence while all move in a ballet of listening.)

What blithe, fine tones! (Jubilant.) The Dew! (Turning to the audience.) The dew!

(Chorus of Fays divides into groups R. and L.)

Fay Chorus (R. and L. alternating):

- (R.) Poor-
- (L.) folk-
- (R.) that hear not—
- (L.) the twinkling
- (All.) Choir!

Fairy Queen (pitifully to the audience):

Touch eyelid and ear with the Pansy blue,

(Chorus R.) And ho!-

(L.)

Lo!--

(All.)

Your dream-world of Desire!

(The Chorus of Fays vanishes to R. and L. as Tableau curtain riscs leaving the Queen in the center. Chorus of Dewdrops grouped about her to rearward. Scene as described in Tableau I.)

SCENE II. THE MOON

The Dewdrop Chorus (to ballet motions, sing "The Chant of the Dew"):

See-

We-

be-

(Bowing.)

the tiny-

shiny-

Dew!

(Moving arms gracefully.)

We dangle-

and bespangle-

the bloom-tangle-

wet!

(Prolonging tone as for an incantation.)

blinking—

and winking-

Moon-

Moon-

at vou!

And we croon-

"So soon?"

"Nay, leave us not yet!"

(Livelier.)

For on leaf-tip, fern-frond, wisp of grass, we are growing, ho, growing

big and wise!

(With motions sweeping the zenith.)

And ho!

We know-

as slow-

you pass-

you love us well-

white-

light-

of the skies!

(They kneel, surrounding Queen, arms and bodies swaying. Looking up rapturously.)

For winsome we dartle

in silvery shoon-

o'er

the far-away floor

of skyey sheen;

and for joy we startle

or slumber aswoon

on the swaying air of the garden green!

Fairy Queen (sadly, to herself; the Dewdrops looking at one another as if they half heard, and wondering at the unseen speaker):

They deem the stars their kin

that dwell

high in the sky!

How strong, poor dreamers dear, the spell!

For far is nigh,

and nigh, alas!

is far, so far!

Dew in the grass,

in heaven, the star!

- (During last lines Queen, slowly waving wand, approaches L. 1st E. Exit at last line.)
- (Dewdrops rub their eyes, shake themselves, and rise. As they chant final lines, they group at R. and L. up stage, with arms uplifted to the Moon.)

Chorus of Dewdrops:

Oh, the dew-folk above,

as we on earth,

all beg you, for love, dear Moon, one boon! We will rollic ay-and frolic, and make you mirth, if you'll stay with us, stay for avewhite Moon!

SCENE III. THE FIREFLIES

Red Drop:

Look!

Blue Drop:

Look!

Golden Drop:

What was that flash-

of grass-green light?

Green Drop:

Why, one of us!

Red Drop:

Some rash

young Dewdrop spright!

(Ghostmoth enters from R. and flutters back and forth among them.)

Violet Drop:

Nay, fly thro' empty air?

No wings have we!

Blue Drop:

We'd fly if we could dare

to fling us free!

Red Drop:

A fire-spark on the breeze blown hither and yon!

Violet Drop:

So high?

Green Drop:

Over tops of trees?

Blue Drop: In the moonshine wan?

Ghostmoth (fluttering among them):

Poor silly people of dew!

Dewdrop Chorus: (Right.)

Ghostmoth, you know?

Ghostmoth (to the Red Drop):

They 're firefolk,

(to the Golden drop)

bright, like you!

that come and go, part moth, part dewdrop, they! Golden Drop: Half-sisters!

Green Drop: Weird!
Blue Drop: The hoped-for marvel!
Violet Drop: Nay,

the mystery feared!

Blue Drop and Golden Drop (singing):

Be they most-drop or most-moth:

Or half fairly and half we be glad . . .

Green Drop: sad,

Golden Drop: good Ghostmoth!

Violet Drop: We should weep.

Red Drop: We would laugh!

Blue Drop: Why tremble?

Violet Drop: That a change

might come on us.

Red Drop: Into some being strange?

Golden Drop: Mysterious?

Blue Drop: Nay, that were also glee!

Green Drop: As dear as this?
Golden Drop: Oh, anyhow to be
Blue Drop and Golden Drop:
is bliss—is bliss!

(The Dewdrops clasp their hands in ecstasy. All their movements should be slow.)

SCENE IV. THE SPIDER

(The trees sway with low, moaning sounds. The Dewdrops shiver slightly.)

Violet Drop: Watch the tree-tops moving

athwart the sky.

Green Drop: Our wisdom reproving. Red Drop: They wave us good-by.

Blue Drop: In the heaven they're caressing

yon velvety room.

Golden Drop: With boughs of mist blessing

The glimmering gloom.

The Spider: (Waves front legs about. At the sound of his voice the Ghostmoth flutters out R.)

O Wind, good Wind, kind Wind! Hearken, hearken, and heed!

Violet Drop: What is the Wind, I wonder?

Green Drop: The Oak's and the Elm's playfellow?

Red Drop:

A thing that with lightning and thunder will leap and roar and bellow!

Spider: O Wind, good Wind, kind Wind,

which much lovest the spider breed!

Red Drop: The truth I told. For methinks the owley-eyed Ghostmoth knows who gossips with double-pinks and tickles the baby-rose; who flirts with jessamine wreaths, and kisses the columbine; and in breaths-of-heaven deep breathes

to blow in the trumpet-vine!

Golden Drop:

Yet whoever, 'mong Dewdrops, heard of lightning and thunder before?

Blue Drop: The Ghostmoth told you?

Golden Drop: Absurd! Blue Prop: Mere fancy! Golden Drop: Leap!

Blue Drop: Bellow?

Golden Drop: And roar?

Spider: Wind, Wind, good Wind, kind Wind!

Hearken, hearken thy Spider; who in nothing hath sinned, long fasting by law;

yet most thankfully grinned, when he glutted his maw. O Wind, good Wind, kind Wind!

What horrors I hear Golden Drop: against my will!

I shudder!

Blue Drop: Red Drop: I fear!

Green Drop: O hush!

Violet Drop: Be still!

Spider: The bird and butterfly

despise thy faithful Spider. Poor sillies, that can't tell why they flit and flutter by. They know thee not as I,

Thou rich provider! Violet Drop: An evil spell

he droneth-alas!

Green Drop: Ah, who can tell

what cometh to pass?

Spider: The wasp and bumble-bee in yellow hats and hosen, they deem them fair and free, buzzing right busily.

Poor honey thieves! But we,

We be thy chosen!

Golden Drop: Think you the Wind will hearken and come?

Green Drop: He's jealous. Red Drop: Chagrin'd.

Violet Drop: I would he were dumb!
Spider: To work and wait and trust
our wont and use and duty.
Thou riddest of dew and dust
that harm us and disgust
our webs, for thou art just,

to worth and beauty!
Golden Drop: A loathsome thought!
Blue Drop: The dust like the dew!

Green Drop: By doubts distraught, . . . Violet Drop: O, would that I knew!

Spider: O Wind, good Wind, kind Wind, Hearken, hearken thy Spider!

Thy thrifty down-glider, on sticky thread, who spins his web wider, and squats overhead—the steadfast abider, thy modest self-hider,

on gnats and flies and lady-bugs fed.

Come quickly, O Wind, kind Wind!

(With the closing lines the Spider descends, and scurries away R.)

SCENE V. THE TREES

The Oak: Ho, the Wind is coming, brothers,

I feel it in leaf and twig! (Sways.)

The Beech (to the Elm):

He little recks of others who are n't as stout and big!

The Oak: Ho, the Wind is coming, I feel it,

in bough and knotty limb!

The Elm (to the Beech):

He is happy and can't conceal it.

The Beech (to the Elm):

Ah, trouble will temper him!

The Oak: O brothers, the gladsome tremble,

in bole and trunk and root! Wild goblins of air assemble to whistle and hollo and hoot!

The Elm: I hate this bluster and wrestle

that distract from our skyward look.

The Beech: Our sisters who cluster and nestle

will be torn in their lowliest nook.

The Oak: If only the warfare were truceless, none could live but the brave and robust.

The Beech: Are our blossoming kinsfolk useless? The Elm: Shall they fight as we? Is it just?

(The Ghostmoth flutters in from R. Flits about from Dewdrop to Dewdrop.)

The Ghostmoth: The fireflies, helter-skelter

and scurrying off to shelter.

And Ghostmoth, too, must hide him, (snails, earwigs, and beetles beside him,)

in a dusty crack of the bark, in a knot-hole dank and dark, lest the Wind his body tear. Dear Dewdrops, have a care. I shudder for you! Ah, why can't shiny Dewdrops fly?
For then, we might together outlive the boisterous weather.
Farewell, sweet friends, good-by!

(Aside as he flits away.)

O, that beauty so soon must die! (Exit L.)

(Shivering among the Dewdrops.)

Green Drop: He saith:

"'T is death!"

Golden Drop: If all must die,

it should be good to die say I!

Blue Drop: At last! Violet Drop: He 's near! Red Drop: Hold fast!

Violet Drop: He's here. (They lean toward each other.)

The Wind (invisible):

I'm the Wind who would wistfully woo you,
Woo! Woo!

(Trees sway and moan.)

The Elm: O Wind, you're a bully and coward,

not to show your face when you smite!

The Wind: Who 'll go round and under and thro' you, You! You!

The Beech: On bushes dainty-flowered why wreak your savage spite?

The Wind: Who 'll strip and uproot and undo you?

Who? Who?

(The Dewdrops shiver and lean toward each other.)

Violet Drop: Heart sore!

Green Drop: Soul-sick!

Red Drop: What roar!

Violet and Green Drops: Help! Quick!

Red Drop: The ache

benumbs.

Blue Drop: I quake!
Golden Drop: Death comes!

The Oak:

Tho' I the more boldly and proudly uptowered, Brothers, we're shamed by your moan and groan!

The Beech: I spoke out my mind. The Elm: I called him coward!

The Oak (sarcastically):

And so, away, ye deem, he's flown?

SCENE VI. THE WIND OF DEATH

(The Trees sway more violently with moaning sounds. One of the Dewdrop Chorus at rear R. who has had no spoken part, drops out of sight behind slanting approach. Two little boys at L. run down stage, joined by two little girls from R. on the way. They chant.)

Dewdrop: (R.) I drop, I run,

fall-break!

Two Droplets: (R.) To-make-

me-more!

Two Droplets: For one-and one

are—two!

The Four Droplets: And two-and two

are-four!

(All the Droplets Chorus, repeating the above words and business as often as desired, four by four, run down and dance all together in a ring.)

Wind-begotten
from on high,
Dew-born,
small, small—
but unspotten—
why, why
would you mourn
our fall?

(They group themselves to R. and L. of Big Drops, turning toward them.)

still clinging to the old?

Come, leap from the strife! Drop singing fourfold, into deep New Life!

Golden Drop and Blue Drop (more and more agitated, croon this dirge):

If first we go, or last we stop, if fast, or slow, what matter, Dewdrop?

Violet Drop (imploringly):

Hush, dears, my fears you excite!

Golden Drop: For lo, we know,

none long may abide

Blue Drop: In panic and woe,

in glory and pride.

Red Drop (defiantly):

I have fought, this thought, and yet fight!

Blue Drop and Golden Drop (alternating):

There is none, nay none, but must somewhile slip, downglide to run, close-cleave to drip.

Green Drop (in terror):

O the leap to the deep, from the height!

Golden Drop:

What matter, despairer, so we spatter, to glitter? Blue Drop:

So we shatter

to fairer,

so we scatter

to fitter?

Red Drop (angrily):

I'll delay

while I may, the delight.

Red, Violet, and Green Drops:

We would hold

to the old,

if we might!

(Golden Drop and Blue Drop let go and repeat the business of the first Drop that fell.)

Red Drop:

What befell?

Green and Violet Drops:

Who can tell?

Golden and Blue Drops (running):

Good night!

(Droplets run in with same words and business as above.)

SCENE VII. THE DROPLETS

(The Droplets down stage greet the incoming Droplets.)

The Newcomers:

We flew

to the new,

as our right.

The Older Droplets:

The Red, and Green, and Blue,

the Violet, and Golden dew, held, O so tight, so tight!

But they danced, and shook and fell,

and broke, and ran pell-mell! And lo, we alight, we alight!

Newcomers: And First (Rcd) Droplet:

I am fire,—

my desire

fulfilled!

Second and Third (Blue) Droplets:

We be sky, (you and I,) as we willed!

Fourth and Fifth (Green) Droplets:

Such green,

who hath seen?

Sixth (Gold) Droplet:

or such gold?

Grand Chorus: Of the shade,

that we prayed,

heart-bold!

Right Semi Chorus:

If fated or free, if mine or his,

Left Semi Chorus:

the hope to be,

and the fear that is,

Grand Chorus: all's one to me,

come that, come this for the hither is glee, and the yonder, bliss!

(Violet, Green, and Red Drops fall. The Droplet Chorus runs out R. and L., singing: "I drop, I run," etc.)

CURTAIN.

TABLEAU II. THE DOOM OF THE DEW

SCENE VIII. THE MOON SET

(The Big Drops are grouped Center stage. Droplet Chorus R. and L. Treetoad on top of Oak Branch L. up stage.)

Droplet Chorus: (R.)

From wee to big, they grew—and grew,

Chorus: (L.) on blooming sprig and leafy twig

All: the merrymaking dew! Chorus: (R.) From big to wee

we broke—

Chorus: (L.) but woke

again to be

All: the glad, the free,

the starry-twinkling folk!

The Treetoad (breaks in harshly):

Be still, you silly, simpleton rout!

(Moon begins to set behind branches.)

There! Willy nilly, your light goes out.

(Stage slowly darkens.)

'T is only reflected from you high lamp.

(Points to last edge of moon.)

You saucy, affected, twinkles of damp!

(The Droplets execut softly, the Drops taking their room in the front of the stage.)

Blue Drop: Who be you to joy in evil-

uttering ugly words and rude?

Red Drop: Whom do we harm, if insooth we believe ill?

How jar we on your solitude?

Treetoad: Treetoad am I—a prophet uncouth, on my crooked oak-limb asquat;

whence boldly I rouse the world to truth, decreeing what is what—and not!

For lo, I know of wind and rain, long ages ere they blow and fall! My trill and croak be oracles plain, understood and dreaded of all!

(The Elm and the Beech, softly swaying, sing low the following dirge.)

Elm: Lower and lower, slowly down

glides the silver glory.

Beech: Twinkle and shimmer in darkness drown,

all, all is transitory.

The Three Trees Together:

But moon goes forth, and stars come in;

awed we stand, beholding the olden end, and the new begin; fall followed of fresh unfolding.

Red Drop: You hear the speech

of Elm and Beech?

Violet Drop: Ay, soft aeolian tones. Golden Drop: What wisdom strange,

of chance and change!

Blue Drop: What sorrowful, sweet moans!

Golden Drop: They know so much. Blue Drop: The stars they touch. Golden Drop: Their tops yet see the Moon.

Violet Drop: Long mosses grey

hang mistily,

and their branches vast festoon.

Green Drop: I tremble, aghast, to mark how fast

our light hath dwindled pale.

Violet Drop: The Treetoad's queer,

and cross-but a seer.

Red Drop: Soothsayings ofttimes fail.

Blue Drop:

He's over glad to tell the bad . . .

Golden Drop: and the truly-wise, methinks

make understood

the fair and the good . . .

Blue Drop: they glimpse thro' the cracks and the clinks!

Golden Drop: Ah, let us learn from such to yearn

for all things good and fair.

Blue Drop: And calmly trust

new gladness must

come forth of our cark and care.

SCENE IX. THE TREETOAD

(A gauze curtain is dropped to dim the scene.)

The Dewdrops (swaying together, sing):

Our love we are wont to croon to the big, round, beautiful Moon in the high and far away. But quite is the splendor gone, his halo of shine withdrawn, while We—we stay, and stay.

Be the stars—our wonder and pride our kinsfolk multiplied? "T is to tell us: "All is well!" Not ours the jealous plaint, tho' feeble our gleam and faint, and we fade invisible.

For the Wind of Death fierce blew; wherefrom at length we knew that life is more and more. Be the light then less and less, thro' dim and dark we guess a Glory to adore.

Treetoad:

O stupid rabble, no knowledge, no wit! Alone fool's babble proves infinite! Your hope's immodest, your faith absurd, your reasoning the oddest the world has yet heard.

For what can continue above you, below? without you, within you? What cometh must go!

None ever returneth, tho' others appear. A fool, then, who yearneth for more than is here.

But Dewdrop noddle with thinking might ache! So, a lie, dears, coddle for phantasy sake.

Yet for worse, for better, for better, for worse, I will hold to the letter and the spirit—I curse!

Green Drop: I knew our hymn

he would deride.

Red Drop: He's clammy and grim

and goggle-eyed.

Violet Drop: The godless wretch doth pride exalt!

Green Drop: He'll find you, and fetch a flaw, a fault . . .

Golden Drop: in starry dews

Blue Drop: and dewy stars,

Red Drop: the evil he pursues,

Golden Drop: and the perfect he mars.

Treetoad:

Ha, ha! You will cherish a flattering lie?"All, all must perish save you and I?"

How strangely amusing your cool conceit! And your betters abusing, what noble heat!

From fixed star and planet, your pedigree's proved? Why not rather from granite, by tempest unmoved?

Tho' the thought be distasteful a wicked doubt meseems—the world's wasteful of dewdrops devout!

You think it should stick to such miracles rare? But—"mirabile dictu" it does n't much care!

And why? There be plenty to prance in your place. So—"festina lente!"— you'll vanish apace.

The end of the story the dewdrop-kind— "memento mori" should keep it in mind!

Good-by, poor sillies, your doom is foreshown; and now my good will is, to leave you alone!

(Exit Treetoad R.)
(The Dewdrops all faint away. Form in groups across stage.
Pause, with soft, dreamy music.)

SCENE X. THE DAWN

(Soft music.)

Violet Drop (waking):

I shiver with strange cold in fitful whiffs of air.

Green Drop (aroused and dazed; sitting up):

No dewdrop twinkles and glisters? Where be you, O my sisters?

Red Drop: The earth, it waxeth old,

the happy skies outwear.

Green Drop: The stars are fading dimmer in a haze of mazy glimmer.

Violet Drop; Gone—gone! And unconsoled we sorrow!—Where? Oh, where?

Golden Drop (stands, hesitatingly):

Maybe, tho' darkness hide them, no evil doth betide them!

Blue Drop (rising, taken with the new suggestion):

Sad converse sweet they hold? As we, their wonder share?

(The rest of the Dewdrops slowly rise.)

Golden Drop (mysteriously):

Ah, while they dim and darken th' hushed whisper within they hearken

Violet Drop (with awe):

as nigher the feel, and the fold of the dream-like slow despair!

(The Cockwren hops out from R down stage. The Dewdrops start back in afright and gather in group at back of stage. Their fear is soon overcome by the cheerful tones of the Wren as he hops back to the hedge top.)

Cockwren (to his mate in the nest on the hedge):

From the fairyland of sleep awaken, O, awaken, Puff-o-down, you and I! From the nest-rim a peep, fluffed wing-feathers shaken then hop, flit and fly! Out-twitter we the chill that the dawn-world numbeth,—flutter and twitter away, with expectance athrill,—for He cometh, He cometh over dingle and brae.

Violet Drop: Who, sisters, cometh think you? Death? that the wren on the hedge-top twittereth?

Green Drop: The Treetoad a doom of woe foretold.

Blue Drop: Is wisest he, who most liketh to scold?

Red Drop: Mayhap that cross-patch prophet erred!

Golden Drop: I am fain to believe the blithesome bird.

Violet Drop: So restless and eager,—can any be wise?

'T is surely Death shall awake and arise.

Green Drop: Ay, the stars be one by one extinct,
and our fate with the fate of them is linkt.

Violet Drop: No feignèd hope, no craven dismay,—
Await we the mystery cold and grey.

The Wren (hopping about in great excitement):

With dewdrops thickly
the world is sown.
He cometh quickly
from the golden Unknown

to quicken and gladden, to kindle and warm; with passion to madden, with love to transform.

Violet Drop: What rosy hues

the skies suffuse!

Green. Drop: A veil withdrawn.
The Wren: The Dawn!—the Dawn!
Red Drop: The marvel grows!

It flashes—it glows!

All the Drops:

The gloom undone—the glory hath won!

(The light grows on the stage.)

The Wren: The Sun-All the Drops: the Sun?

The Wren:

The Sun!

Red Drop:

The blaze mounts higher.

The hedge is on fire!

Blue Drop:

Hark fluty notes

from a myriad throats!

Golden Drop: The heaven aflare-

light everywhere!

(Bright light. All raise their arms and look upward in wonder.)

The Wren:

The Day, Sweetheart!

The Dewdrops:

The Day?

The Wren:

The Day!

SCENE XI. THE RUBY-THROAT

(The Dewdrops blaze out in light thrown on their tinselled costumes, and bejewelled little persons.)

Dewdrops:

Glad amber, soft turkis,

shy amethyst,

gay emerald, clear topaz,tho' daughters of mist;

Brave diamond, bold ruby

in radiant array,

we thank thee, and worship bright Sun-lord of Day!

(Ruby-throat enters from R. He flits in and out among the Dewdrops.)

Ruby-Throat: As I hum and boom

from bloom to bloom,

still poised in air for greedy bliss,

the wind of my wings

a panic flings

'mong the dewy-clustered clematis.

Ho! I chuckle at heart as the Dewdrops start; for the humming earth, 'mid-sky, like me, hangs poised at the brink of the Sun to drink his heavenly honey of glamour and glee!

Red Drop: Lo, jack-in-the-pulpit,

and lady-smock fine,

Green Drop: Lo, larkspur, and foxglove,

and frail columbine,

Violet Drop: sweet-briar, honeysuckle,

Canterbury bells—

All Dewdrops:

What form and what color!
What sweet mingled smells!

Blue Drop: Yet, O Sun, thou art nowise the King of the flowers;

Golden Drop: An infinite Dewdrop, we know thou art Ours!

All: For do we not feel the

For do we not feel thee updraw us to Thee? and couldest thou draw us wert Thou not as we?

Ruby-Throat (protesting in friendly fashion to the Dewdrops, who are too much concerned with each other to heed him greatly):

I am Ruby-Throat
the Happy;
so my knowledge,
it is scrappy,—
got here a bit,
there a bit,—
and for better
I don't care a bit;
as I'm positive
the Sun, dears,
is a sunflower—
or there 's none, dears!

For the Sunflower
't is who told me—
don't be vexed, then,
and scold me!
I'm a kindly
good fellow,—
but, you see, both—
are yellow!

Violet Drop (with a sense of impending doom):

We brighten, but dwindle! Shall this be the end?

Red Drop: To long for each other,

yet skyward ascend?

Blue Drop: In the heaven, O, Sun-drop

disperse us, and fuse

Green Drop: the many in one, Drop,

in thee, Lord of Dews!

Golden Drop (with the mystic emphasis of euthanasia):

A vision hath come to me,
me, dullest and lowest!
I cried: "Be not dumb to me.
Speak, speak, if Thou knowest!
What meaneth the mystery?
we brighten, we enkindle,
to a glory, sun-glistery—
yet minish and dwindle?"

And the Vision—It smiled on me, so gentle and tender!
"Hang lovingly, my child, on me, thy whole self surrender; and lo, thou art part of me, updrawn and upholden, in the veriest heart of me, azure and golden!"

(The Dewdrops have listened in blissful elation to the vision.

They slowly vanish, by the drop of the Tableau Curtain.)

SCENE XII. THE REQUIEM

(The forepart of the stage is slowly heaped with petals that fall as a snowstorm steadily to the end of the scene.)

The Dewdrops (unseen):

Ha, we are not!
Others be.
But when were we ever we?

And yet are we not at last, upvanished in the vast?

Ha, the past is forgot!
The future is not!

For the Now is, alone! The Unseen! The Unknown!

Oh, blessed be the Dew, born ever anew,

downfallen to ascend: no beginning, no end!

Soul-quiet
in the strife!
Death-rapture—
and Life!

SCENE XIII. THE FAIRY QUEEN'S AFTERWORD

(The Tableau Curtain rises, disclosing the Fairy Queen with Fays and Fairies C. stage. Grouped about her are all the Characters of the drama, the Dewdrops being nearest her, in a circle. She comes down stage, slowly turning and waving her wand. All except the Dewdrops slowly pass out R. and L.)

Fairy Queen: Be any offended
at aught here heard?
Our Phantasy's ended;
yet hearken, one word!

(Chorus playfully hush one another, and all the characters on the stage.)

Dear folk, I would win you this truth to believe: the Dewdrops are in you to your spirit they cleave.

Chorus (quite drolly didactical, with much stress):

They are in you, ay, in you,
to your spirit they cleave.

Fairy Queen: I can see them atwinkle
tho' you (of course) can't
I can hear—tinkle, tinkle!
their crystalline chaunt.

Chorus (with motions of eager listening):

We can hear—tinkle, tinkle,—
their crystalline chaunt.

(The Dewdrops wave their arms in rhythmic motion.)

Fairy Queen: Ho, the Dew, how it dances, in heart and in mind; in smiles and in glances, now unseen, now divined!

(The Fays and Fairies follow the movements of the Queen.)

Fairy Queen: I am old, very old, yet
I'm also a child;
for my heart is not cold yet,
nor my spirit defiled!

If the world tho' have hurt you,
I'll bestead and befriend.
See, this Pansy hath virtue
your playthings to mend!

(The Queen holds out the pansy for all to view and the Chorus mimick her motions.)

And youth? youth? What is it?
but the will to receive
the day-dreams that visit
the soul,—and, believe!

CURTAIN.

SEWANEE LYRICS

AND KINDRED VERSE

THE REJECTED LOVER TO THE MOON

Dear Moon, so white, so swift, that fliest from cloud to cloud athwart each starry rift,— how haughty and virgin-browed! There clings about thy form a circle of hallowed light. It glides, and hides the swarm of stars that would share thy flight.

Dear Moon, our hearts can ache, or quiver with ecstasy.

Is thine too cold to break?

Too lonely in liberty?

No soul thy soul hath known that lived to enrapture it?

For aye alone—alone—athirst for the infinite?

The sky with clouds is strewn, a sea with its isles asleep.

Thou sailest fast, dear Moon,—
thy love is across the deep!

But one whose life is wrecked
would rather believe thee cold,
unloving, unloved, erect—
a queen with her crown of gold!

"HASHISH"

I.

THE CHOICE

Oh, weary of the westering sun,
of deserts reaching far away,
of roses that sicken one by one,
of thorns that quicken day by day;
may others for wealth and for honors wish;
I cherish the dreams of the sweet hashish!

Methought new light shone in those eyes whose lovely gleams the soul entrance; and, making richer seas and skies with blisses bewitch her, glance for glance; may others for kisses and love-looks wish;—

I cherish the dreams of the sweet hashish!

They vaunt the pleasures of the cup wherein the purple wine is poured,—
the spirit riseth up and up—
God's fire in their eyes is; life hath soared

above the blue noon of hope and wish;—

I cherish more fondly the sweet hashish.

Some whisper of joys that blot all care for them who love the Koran's lore;—voluptuous houris soothe them there where ecstasy sure is, evermore in the swoon undying of will and wish—I cherish the dreams of my sweet hashish.

II.

THE TRANCE

Meseemed, as on a silken couch I lay, that all had melted in the far-away where nothing but my heart and peace were found. And there were perfumes drowsing all around in visible waves of sweetness, and there stole mysterious music thro' and thro' the soul,

till all was fresh and full of strength divine, yet soothed to calm—such ecstasy was mine! And as I lay I listened for those notes quivering with tenderness, as tho' from throats of nightingales among the full-leaved trees, warbling athwart still amethystine seas. And then medreamed, I was a beauteous Lake sparkling for glory, whose smooth ripples break in lines of light among the rushes dusk.

His bosom sheen unto the sky made bare— He drew her downward to him debonair, to mirroring deeps from her aerial height in cloudy pure and azurous delight; while leaving not her heavenly home above, below She made him lovely with her love.

I was that Lake and mine its joyous thrill, when over him in amorous self-will the breeze blew orient bubble and pearly spray to fairy foam in shimmery disarray. I was that Lake whereon blithe sunbeams danced in glassy stillness mazily entranced. I was that Lake, and yet—he was not I. Rapturous doubt! At once to live, and die: tho' here, yet ever vaguely otherwhere,voluptuously aware and unaware. Thus was I wooed and cradled to and fro by dream-breathed beauty in listless ebb and flow:nebulous fancies hither drifted still, nowhither bound;-an inexhaustible river of conscious mystery and sheen, silvery weird and sunnily serene,star-shine and lullaby and balmy bloom, hush, zephyrous twilight, and evasive gloom. And ever, all meseemed there was-was I. . . . even I-without, afar,-within, and nigh.-

Lo, where my Lake among the rushes lay lapping along his marge, softly asway upon the rippling heave, methought I saw a golden star in snows that never thaw, yet ever in the brooding sunbeams shine:a Lily afloat-virginity divine unvisited by messengers of love, by honey-bee or breeze. The skies above, the skies within the Lake, smile both on her. My Lily openeth and her petals stir as the white wings of some enamored Dove, and flutter till the skies below, above, tremble with gladness. As I gazed and gazed, another filmy veil of dream was raised. My Lily and Dove became an innocent Maid, in naught but heaven-lent loveliness arrayed! There unabashed she stood so childish-pure and smiled, and waded deeper, insecure, thrilling me with a sweet desireless joy; even me, the Lake, wherewith her fingers toy how delicately!-do I live or die? I am her Lake, scarce knowing I am I! She stoops, and lo, a Dove with rosy feet is flown to settle lightly as is meet upon her shoulder meek; and she replies with grateful happy radiance from dark eyes, caressing with flushed cheek the cooing Dove, till laugh the heaven below, the heaven above!

III THE WAKING

List! Woe is me—
sweet apparition stay, oh, stay,
bathe in that lake of my dreaming soul—
nestle dear Dove, in her bosom;—make whole
Ye pure and gentle, or utterly slay
the homesick and lost—woe's me!

Dreams!—broken dreams!
Where now is the golden, the living Lake?

Fainter and farther away it gleams melody, fragrance and quickening beams a mist-like slow-fading illusion, forsake my broken, my broken dreams!

Why, churlish world, cruelly rush on the ravished brain?
Hast thou no awe of the heart, close-furled, bliss-swathed—whose incense-fumes upcurled flung on the wind of awakening pain, vanish,—O hard, harsh world?

Dreams!—dearest dreams!
Why must ye die in a dream, less pure?
Waking we sleep, and asleep we awake
Maiden, and Dove, and opaline Lake?—
O would that your bliss could forever endure,
my dearest, my dear, dear dreams!

A FEBRUARY DAY IN TENNESSEE

I lie among the yellow grasses, so tall and dry; and, as I lie, a cloudlet passes athwart the sky.

'T is Hope alone as yet who dallies from dell to dell, and through the leafless garden-alleys bids the buds swell.

But, as you cloudlet flieth further, evading view, O where if ever, tell me, were there such depths of blue!

Idly I snatch the wither'd grasses by handful sheaves, and twist them into arching masses with shaggy eaves, and lo! a gothic baptistery:
four arches keen
of sunny gold, and with the very
blue sky between!

And so, I fall a-dreaming sweetly of One—God knows . . . (how should I name her indiscreetly—my dewy rose?)

Here have we been betroth'd and married, and fast we fly on wings of skyey genii carried, glad She and I.

Whither? Who asks in such still weather if East or West?

So, Darling, we but fare together, all ways be best!

What? but a day-dream? O dear grasses,—
alone, unwed?

I scan each cloudlet as it passes
high overhead . . .

bound for Love's mystical far Thule, do they not seem? O might I evermore—but truly dream this one dream!

A RESPITE

Laughing I lay on a Summer's day,
bedded in blossoming grass;
and little, little did I think of Her!
Love is not all of life—alas!
'Would that it were,
'Would that it were!

Oh! that we could be but understood;
bees must their honey amass
when skies are blue and grasses lightly stir.
Love is not all of life—alas!
'Would that it were,
'Would that it were!

Selfish the soul that from love-dreams stole,
watching the gay breeze pass
o'er ferns and flowers, but Oh! all things aver;
Love is not all of life—alas!
'Would that it were,
'Would that it were!

IN VAIN

A passer-by, a passer-by, only a passer-by!

And I hoped to have thee always nigh, to hear thee bid me live or die for thee, for thee—but what was I?

Only a passer-by.

An idle dream, an idle dream,
only an idle dream!
For we meet to part, and when we seem
just near enough to kiss, the stream
will sweep us on, from dream to dream—
Only an idle dream!

O bitterness of bitterness,
bitterest bitterness!

That the heart should spend its tenderness,
and bless a heart that cannot bless,
and waste away, yet love no less—
Bitterest bitterness!

CHERRY BLOOM

See! see the cherry-blossoms, spring's bee-laden snows a-dancing on the merry breeze, in radiant orchard rows.

The robin, cheery red-breast, on the topmost spray, is piping to the clear blue skies the rapture of the day.

The stream is trilling, grass-bound, filled full of silver showers, impatient for the crocuses and summer's fragrant hours.

What soul is there could foster thoughts of sullen gloom amid such joyous loveliness, such mirth of cherry-bloom?

Woe's me! a little maiden—no toys upon her bed, her thin hands listless lying, and weary her drowsy head.

Among her yellow curls, scarce stirring in her breath, shine gathered close the blossoms white, and this each blossom saith:—

"Upon thy snowy pillow, among thy yellow hair, for thee we're waiting, Sister-soul, with thee our heaven to share.

"Oh! tell us, Darling, longer, much longer need we stay? an angel brought us here to thee; come fly, come fly away!"

And see! the blossoms flutter 'gainst the window-pane, and see the blessèd sunbeams fall in showers of golden rain,

and see the pale lips parted, smiling sweet in death—
as tho' an angel kissed her mouth and kissed away her
breath,

and hear the cheery robin, the streamlet's lilted lay, and hear the wails and stifled sobs!—hush! hear a mother pray!

The earth her lap prepareth, dreaming o'er the dead. Soon periwinkles white and blue will cover a little bed.

NOX MYSTICA

Lo, the eager oaks their arms outfling and capture a nook of the cool night sky wherethro' one star, like a startled thing, peeps at our world as the clouds flit by.

The mocking-bird pipes thee a ditty, O star, and spring's little leaves, astart with delight, in the breeze to thy still blue home afar like silvery birds are straining for flight.

Oh, our world it is lovely, and love here sweet, and a joy spirit-sating this day-dream to live; yet at times the brain throbs, and the pulses beat as tho' heaven had withholden some gift it would give.

O star in beautiful peace afloat, happy for fulness of scintillant mirth, knowest thou—Thou from our passion remote what magic is lacking to enhalo the earth?

Or lacketh there naught save in me who complain, who have sundered my heart from the bliss of the whole, making 'mine' jar with 'thine,' and pleasure with pain, and folly with wisdom, and body with soul?

O God, in a tract of soft still gloom would I might burn like that star of thine filling with glory the infinite room, shine on forever, and shine, and shine!

But the heart's prayer, fraught with ache of the sense, it is not the soul's. Lo and hark, I have sinned. For a mutter of thunder man knoweth not whence, and the terrified leaves fold them tight in the wind!

Ah, rather than calm—for the truth would I yearn for the truer on and on, the sore warfare within; Ah, rather than joy in life's loveliness, learn

The lore of bereavement, of sorrow for sin.

Up in the cool clear sky, embrowed of the shivering boughs a-drip with the rain,—no change; but a vow of the spirit is vowed, and sad is the loss, and sadder the gain.

For the mocking-bird pipeth no more as he lists, and the little spring leaves hang down with the wet, and the star—like a tear in God's eye—thro' thin mists it trembleth—down-trembleth, and forever hath set.

THE SOUL'S SANCTUARY

How often from the soul
in silent starlit meditative moments
there wells a spring of tears,
that murmurs in our ears,
and brings back music, fragrance of dead years—
Love's radiant robberies and sweet bestowments,—
while faintly far-off bells of memory toll!

Then, in the twinkling net
of silver starbeams, are our senses tangled;
and eyes, long-dimmed for us,
grow kindly luminous,
and voices, silent long, sound tremulous—
so very near us, that our spirits, jangled,
to silver harmonies of heaven are set.

What then is wistful-worst
of those scarce bearable vague recollections?
The restless bitter thought
of love that came to naught?
of sympathy so needed, yet unsought,
which we withheld? of hoarded-up affections
that might have fed a soul and stilled its thirst?

O sacred impulses we quenched!
Our world receives, alas, too little kindness;
it hath such aching need,
so few its anguish heed,
its eyes that crave, its lips that dare not plead—
while full of joyous haste and selfish blindness,
the rich-in-love pass by with hands tight-clenched.

Nay, bitterer things there be
than sharp remorse for sympathy close-hidden!
The thought that side by side
we fared, yet dared to chide
whom most we might have heartened, had our pride
been of our better spirit to sweetness chidden;
and gone are they, and sadly wistful we!

Our lives re-echo still
to mourners' footsteps and to prayers ungranted.
Their altars—dark and cold!
Light-up sweet words untold,
kind deeds foregone, till the very dome of gold
glistens with stars, and the soul that sore hath panted
for hymns and service holy, have her fill!

UNDER THE STARS

Tell us, tell us, we beseech you
do You love us still?

Earth's mad cry,—speak, can it reach you
on heaven's shining hill?

O the Stars, lights of your city burning in your streets, tell us, Friends, for old love's pity if love's heart yet beats. Far forever must we linger, hopelessly alone? Point our way with spirit-finger to your Land unknown!

"Not the old familiar places haunt we still for you; Not in far-off starry spaces build we mansions new.

"Now, ah, now we see and hear you, feel your joy and pain; long to comfort, yearn to cheer you, counsel and sustain.

"You it is who will not see us,
will not hear and touch;
still withdraw and fear and flee us—
lest we love too much?

"Deep within you blooms the garden guirt of rivers four; Strength and Troth and Faith and Pardon, brimming evermore.

"Lo, the Tree of Life fast-rooting in the midst thereof, myriad-budding, myriad-fruiting, miracles of Love.

"Pomp of wealth, and proud achievement, fame vainglorious none hath solace for bereavement. Come within,—to Us!"

Tho' the stars, O dear Departed, twinkle and believe. . . . We alas,—dull, heavy-hearted doubt, and yearn, and grieve.

LOVE IN HEAVEN

My God, my God, what shall I say of Thee, who madest man a marvel to himself? Dumb, shall he gaze forever in Thy face transfixed with wonderment and love of Thee? Death into life—Thy smile is life and heaven! Hate into love—Thy light obliterates all that grows not infinite, divine and pure! My God, my God, let me be always dumb!

Yet such annihilation is not meant to be the close of this poor passion-hymn. Thou wilt have service of us while we live as well as worship, so we dare not die. Somehow Thy love will temper for us then the inconceivable splendor of Thy brow, and soothe us with increasing sight of Thee as holier we grow, and liker Thine.

Heaven is not meant to be the grave of man; his love, if worthy of divine recall, shall bloom once more, when he shall find sweet truth in all the irrecoverable dreams of time, but every one transfigured, raised on higher throne, shot through and through with light. O God, let earth for me be what Thou wilt, more than I lose I find again in Thee!

Here thwarted, there consoled; here grieved to death. there flooded with delirious holy joy; here parted from the things we cherish most, there welded into one with what we love; eternal Selfhood, everlasting God! unbounded Passion, rich unhindered Rest!

O Earth, I take thee! Heaven at length will come, and She I lose be found more fair in God!

SONG AND COUNTERSONG

"When Love hath passed us by"

I.

SONG

The cornflowers thro' the wheat beam sky-blue, and the poppies burn in crimson joy; at every step we meet some winsome petall'd friend from whom we learn how fresh is life, and sweet! Wherefore—the deeper sigh, if Love, alas! if Love have passed us by!

Our life is not in vain?
The firmament hath stars for all
that flicker on; and every soul is fain
to know his own and scan them, lest they fall?
But pain, unmeasured pain
in tears may blot the sky
for some, alas! if Love have passed them by!

No good can life bequeathe;—
beauty abideth with the dead,
and falsehood maketh thick the air we breathe.
True hearts will not be lightly comforted!
Beneath the flowers, beneath
is rest! Who would not die
if Love, alas, if Love had passed him by?

II.

COUNTERSONG

The world is hard and heartless, blind to the pure and good? Its lusts unsated ever, we drudges given for wage no thing we would? And so for hopeless hope we sigh? . . .

And yet, ah, yet why should one vainly fret, aspire to aught, or aught of ill regret, if he no angel of light have met—
if Love have passed him by?

Youth's ardent hopes extinguished, ideals thrust aside—
marshalled in futile battle,
our faith down-cast, laid low our noble pride,—
that we may meekly learn to die?
And yet, ah, yet
Despair may strength beget;
angelic sword in hand, our face We set
against the dragon's guile and threat—
if Love have passed us by—
if Love have passed us by!

SYMPATHETIC MUSIC

Breath-seizing, irresistible delight!

O Singer sweet and pure,
beneath the dartling stars thy magic might
who could for long endure?

Those tensest strings to skill'd white fingers yield their plaintive spirit-wails, till half our sorest sorrowing is healed, wafted to Dreamland vales:

trippings of children's rosy feet, light, gay, down silver stairs of sound; sobbings of love, unanswered, far away, of yearning heavenward bound;

dark reachings for a music still more sweet, with aching heart astrain; delicious dyings at beloved feet—intensest, dearest pain;

soft, soul-seducing harmonies that make delirious fancies come, and, ere their azure-wingèd flight they take, with bliss the heart benumb;—

Oh! I have listen'd till the Past hath seem'd chang'd in all bitter things; till in the bitterness of bliss I dream'd that love no sorrow brings.

Then notes fell thick in pearly rain, like tears, and lay like gracious dew

Among the thirsting flow'rs—thought dead long years—
and lo! they bloom'd anew!

DIRGE

(From "Love Conquereth")

Drift, drift away—
none knoweth whither bound.
Thy hand upon the river lay,
sweet Love, and stay its sound.
The water-lilies sleep,
the meadows dream,
the silver willows weep
beside the stream—
past, past the steeple in the twilight gray—
drift, drift away!

Flow, flow along,
thou deepening River, go
in silent majesty, thy song
sung under breath and slow.
The shores fast widen, fade,
and leave Thee free;
into the night flow unafraid,
into the sea—

far, far, to where the waves are long and strong—flow, flow along!

CALLED FROM THE SHEEP-COTES

Love? I know him with his golden curls, and his lustrous diadem of light circling brows that glow, like some pure girl's, with a purity all white.

Simple his garb, though knowing God's great choice, serious ways that speak of high desires, eyes uplifted, fervid tones of voice sweeter than his quivering lyre's.

Shall I trust him when some later day, sceptered, seated on his splendid throne crowned a King—to be unchanged for aye, just the same my soul hath known?

Will he then be generous and true, still have eyes as mild and clear as now, hand as gentle, firm, and open too, when the crown hath bound his brow?

Ask not! Place in faith the precious crown—
place it proudly on his sacred head.
Having worn it, could he cast it down?
Leave his throne—through mire to tread?

PALMISTRY

Little hand, let me look at its lines—
I can read it, I know, to-day.
Let me hold it: too brightly it shines,
I must read it some other way.

Let me rivet it tightly to mine—
't is the same that last night I kissed.
Let them lie in your lap. I'll divine
palm to palm, thus, and wrist to wrist.

What I learn? I can't tell you. Your eyes but repeat what the pulse just said:—
I have learn'd all I want, and am wise,—
and none shall know what I've read.

NOCTURNE

Evening hath come, mystery-fraught, stilling the feverous pulses of thought. Darling, I pray—often thou cheatest
Time of his minutes that silently fly—sing me a song, sing me thy sweetest!
hearts will ache they know not why—ache—I know not why.

Life is a void, lonely and black;
lasts but a moment the meteor's track;
all that we do, all that we suffer,
lost in the gloom of a desolate sky!
But for thy songs seas had been rougher—
sing then, Darling; sing, nor sigh
seeing daylight die!

Visions of strength, visions of peace, visions of love when our sorrow shall cease; visions of faith, visions of splendor, all, indistinct, in the twilight flit by. Give me thy hand, gentle and tender;

Darling, sing! . . . They all draw nigh—sing, and heaven is nigh!

TWIN DEWDROPS

Twin rose-buds, side by side, on each a ruby drop afire. Longing for love in one to glide, poor dewdrops! Who will bring them nigher? Between, a chasm how deep!

The spears of grass below, how far!

Nay, can they risk the awful leap?

Befriend them, breeze! take star to star!

Alas, no wind will blow, no help can come,—and love is pain! Forth, must they, passion-burning, throw their shivered light of love in vain?

Too rich to prize each gem,
(His sun looks down with greedy heat—)
hath God then need to pity them?
No more athwart the gap they greet.

Dear vanished drops of dew! . . . What say ye? Have ye met, and kissed? Ah! death at last united you; God gathering both in one white mist?

FROST-WORK

'T was a chill, chill night, and my Love slept fast, on her warm, soft couch asleep— and a lovelorn glance at her bedside cast, I did steal tiptoe to peep thro' the moonlit window with woodbine hung, which in spring blooms rich, but now with its close-twin'd twigs, that their fretwork flung on the panes, seem'd sad somehow.

It was still. Th' tree-tops in their ice-mail shone, and the ground crispt hard and keen, and the stars got cold as the hours crept on, and the tired moon drows'd between indistinct blue hills. So I pray'd friend Frost, as my soul breath'd warm good-bys, for my own sweet Love, who in sleep lay lost, to record Love's hallowed sighs.

Then I stole forth sure that she soon must know how I watcht all night anear—
nor disturb'd glad dreams as the moon set slow, and the stars droopt 'reft of cheer.

Ere the day dawn'd fully a sunbeam sought from her eyelids sleep to shame—
for the hoar panes glister'd where Frost's skill wrought in a fern-frond wreath my name!

AFTER TEARS

When the rain-drops shiver in tree-tops high, and glisten and twinkle, now crimson, now gold; and the green grass glows as a star-strown sky, whose webs are heavy with wealth untold;

with a glad quick chirp, or a sweet long cheep, when birds have begun to flutter and hop; and the bright twigs, startled from day-dreams deep, in panic sudden, their treasures drop;

when at wayward intervals clear loud notes go cleaving with gladness the hush of the air; when, the rent clouds drifted away, earth floats in sight of heaven—bid good-by to Care!

We will fling wide windows and doors—ask in the breeze that is longing to visit us, Dear; and the sweetheart blossoms that fain would win (your honeysuckles) a welcome here!

Let us lean close, Darling! Let cheek touch cheek, let hand be in hand as though never to part.

Let us breathe life's fulness—and no word speak—just feel Love knitting us heart to heart!

A SEWANEE IDYL

Warm shone the sun. Airs rare and rich to drink in deep, blew free and fresh; for earth and sky did June bewitch, bewildering spirit and flesh.

Like dawn-flushed clouds the azaleas rose:
like snowdrifts banked—their blossom-mounds.
What hum and drone and flutter and doze
and flurry of elfin rounds!

And all about, on tiptoe, stood (unwitting lovers to espy) wee blithesome gossips of the wood—peaked ear and eager eye.

Winsome, tho' unabashed and pert, some wagged, some winked, some nimbly leapt o'er the curtseying grass when the sunbright skirt foreby them breezily swept.

The path its golden miles unwound, till sudden,—the rocky mountain-edge! A spring quick-pattered, valley-bound, from ferny ledge to ledge.

And far to plainward long they gazed on checkered greens and browns forth-spread to where bloom-ridges violet-hazed, but never word they said.

And lo, beneath them, fathoms down, there circled dots of living light atwinkle now o'er green and brown, now blurring out of sight.

They watched those happy whirling folk in skies below their heavenlier earth, till silence in light laughter broke for happy-hearted mirth.

Oh, blessèd long-gone summer days—
alone together—the quiver and hush
of noon—the wistful warm delays—
the thrill of hermit-thrush—

intimate converse, soul and soul,—
marvel of meanings yet unguessed, . . .
and unawares her shy hand stole
in his for breathless rest!

Close mystic look, all-hallowed touch, and love's transfiguring first kiss,—
Ah, who may tell the tale of such eternities of bliss?

Again and yet again they go that self-same bloomy woodland way, nor ever end shall either know of that high holiday.

REPARTEE IN THE PARK

"Brush the cobwebs from my brain?"
No sir, thank you, no sir!
They would rouse far less disdain
dared you scan them closer.

See, the cobwebs on the grass? th' mossy cherub statue, dewdrop-laden, as you pass dartling starrily at you?

So the cobwebs in my brain sparks of fancy spatter.— What tho' wagtails waggle inane? What tho' magpies chatter?

Cobwebs too be spun to snare gnats that plague and pester?
Nay, Sir Schoolman, you we'd spare.
Ho for the May-queen's jester!

FIVE SONGS FROM "SIGURD"

I.

SIGURD'S PLEDGE

Up-leapeth the heart's desire to westward, to seaward:O Maid of the wavering fire, to restward, to thee-ward!

To the bliss of love's infinite pain,
the anguish oblivion assuageth not,—
to the dregs the mystical wine
I drain,—
ever-living, human, divine
glorious woman that ageth not!

For of love is my heart fulfilled, and to westward, to seaward, fain would I fare forth, Brynhild, to restward, to thee-ward!

II.

GRIMHILD'S ENCHANTMENT OF SIGURD

Out of the dark climbeth the sun. Hark, hark, the night is done. High leaps the lark, and the heaven is won.

In the sweet-breathed morn be flowers bedewed. Love is reborn; Hope is renewed, and the soul hath foresworn her solitude. Who draweth near for passion and mirth? Shamefast her cheer, and winsome her worth? Behold she is here mere maiden of earth.

The spell is broke.
Thy woe hath fled.
And joy I invoke
on thy hallowed head.
Awake, as awoke
the day from the dead!

III.

THE SPELL SONG BY BRYNHILD'S HOLD

Hand in hand, eye in eye, together we stand to live and to die.

Heart in heart, soul in soul, weld part to part in the holier whole!

Gunnar the swart,— Sigurd the golden, to further or thwart close-enfolden and holden.

Far, waxeth to nigh; wont, waneth to strange. I am thou, thou art I in the awe of the change.

THE BALDUR DIRGE

Ah, the sweet young death—
tear-dewed as the rose,
yea, and fragrant of fame his wafted breath,
whiles the cool wind blows.

Seven days, seven nights
hath Baldur the Beautiful slept;
but none was found who hath power, woe's me,
to awake him!

Seven days, seven nights
a grievous watch we have kept.
Who in earth, who in heaven hath heart,—
so fair,—to forsake him?

Seven days, seven nights
have the Gods in Godhome wept,
or ere to the bale fire, with Nanda, his love,
they take him.

Ha, the broad, the free flare of the dawn glow-barred!
Boughs leap to the light in the song-thrilled air.
Is Death cruel and hard?

V.

GUDRUN'S BLOOD-WITE

Hath Brynhild ravished my place in the bale-fire's flames?Yet 't is I, even I, Gudrun shall efface in blood our shames.

Lo, and hark! A Hunnish hall and for help men cry; the walls thereof bow them, the gables down fall, and in anguish—ye die! The Niblung house, and the hoard, our Kingfolk, and land:—
ashes and smoke before Sigurd my lord for the bale-fire's brand!

Thine heart for naught didst thou pierce!
Shall He love thee the more—
or the storm that roareth pitiless, fierce,
with welter of gore?

A RIME OF THE WICKED BIRDS IN JUNE

My heart is light
with the joy of June,
light with the hopes of the morning.
Bright
was the night,
and gay
the day.
So, comrades dear, take warning!

Slowly swells the mermaid-song, languid movement, rich delight,grace and glory glide along, rainbow-beauty, softly bright. Ho! for a toss of the bacchant's locks! arm in arm, and the dance-wave rocks: soul with soul, we defy earth's swaya wing-beat strong ere we float along o'er waves that play in golden daysmile meets smile, while I (and She) caught in a world of mermaid glee, free on the rhythm to far realms flee, where the spirit would stay for aye!

Then, the dance was over, friends,
A gurgle of laughter breathless—
the sweetest of hours too early ends,
but the joy of the soul is deathless!

We slipped together
out of the hall,
and no one missed us
in the chatter of all.
Through aisles of elms
to silvery realms
that melted in heavenly vistas,

on, on we roamed through the gloom of the trees, where the fountain foamed like magical seas

in the crystalline glare of the moon; the flowers about us, fresh and sweet,

(expressly come to be witnesses dumb of human bliss complete) nodded, I think, and dared to wink.

Yet there we rested, laughed and jested, hoped that "the day would n't dawn too soon," peered at the "queer dear face of the moon," heard the fountain's tinkle and sputter, heard the leaves in the full breeze flutter; till cool, and scent, and young life's merriment beguiled us to venture an odd experiment:

hand in hand, before we knew,—
lips found lips, though none had taught us.
Who was there but the moon to view
how Love in his sweet snare caught us?

A foot-step fell!
we rose in terror.
'T was nobody. Well?
An evident error.

Ashamed of what? 'T was Love's own plot. Yet, mutely went we back, the sky o'er-clouded, sullen and black. And she left me alone at the door of the hall; with a cousin I hated she flitted away. away in the fated crazed swirl of the fray. Yes, left me alone at the door of the hall! not a look to atone for desertion: no call that was audible, beck that was visible! Motives, no doubt, if you heard her version, maidenly motives most laudablebut oh, my heart's plight on that mad June night seemed bitterly, bitterly risible!

But my moonlight queen—
was not
forgot.

What was it, oh, what
that had slipped between?

One kiss—the first
from the lips of a girl
that I got by theft not right—
was that what had curst
our poem of pearl,
eclipsing its silver-white light?

At length we met—
became good friends;
but no word of our night of June
as yet—

though who could believe
a soul might forget
that fountain's tinkle, that "queer dear moon"?
believe that love thus ends
mere "friends"?
that Love can perish so soon?

One day we strolled, a year from then in the woods together, dreamy again, as still as the warm-cool weather. The friars of the wood's imp-brotherhoods, they stung me like briers those gnomes of the woods; till I fervently prayed as we "gaed and gaed" that her thoughts might be gone too far to take note of the scoff of the gnomes that would doff their caps where the mad bells are; how my blood danced, tingled as their foolscaps jingled, lest such mock-bows all might mar!

"You will make my proud queen blush,
O gnomes!
Away, hide, hush
in your bowery homes!"
In vain, in vain I cried
and sighed.
"You see?"—"You see?"—from the woods
it came.
"Who?"—"Who?"—in a quavering tone replied.
—"She's fooling you!"—"She's fooling you!"
My hot heart burst aflame.

—" Too pure!"—" Too demure!" —" Who? Will she be your . . . " Your own, own Sweet?"

My agony grew. -" She fooling you!" -" Who?"-" Who?" they repeat: -" She fooling you!" -" Too true!" they whistled, -" Too true!" -" We too!" A pause! . . . I stole a look at her face, and saw her soul with its angel grace. -" Oh, will she be yoursyour own, own Sweet?" -" Oh, will she be yours "that catch they repeat. For my soul "too pure"yet who could endure such agony longer or stronger? So I fell at her feetcried:- "Will . . . will you be my own, own queen forever?" -" You see?"-" You see?" From the woodland green how they mocked my cramped endeavor!

Yet the rest
were best
hushed tight
for aye;
since my heart is light
with the joy of June,
light with the bliss of living!
Bright
is the night,
and gay
the day.

And my heart
to the gnomes
of woodland homes
in part
I'll say,
is forgiving!

MOLLY, MAY, AND DOLLY UP THE GLEN

I.

Titter. tinkle down in a dusky cleft. Glitter, twinkle, Shiver and sprinkle diamond spray to right or left on the wind away careless of loan and theft; on flowers that assemble for a chance to dance near the edges; on fern-fronds that tremble all day in dismay as they peep down deep steep slippery vertiginous ledges.

II.

Now come, be dumb. Lie still in that pool clear, quiet, and cool, under arches of mountain laurel; for each bloom is a bell oddly stiff, without smell, but of beautiful white or pink coral.

III.

Little Pool. you're coquettish and prettily pettish, freckled with blotches of golden sun, speckled with bloomdust, foamy with fun. Are you vain, little Pool, of your primness? Explain, little fool, without playmate how came it you hid, little Pool, in the cool, little fool, in the cool, little Pool. and the dimness? For who 'll, little Pool, say who 'll, little fool, in this lonely glen ever find you, or when he has found you out, mind you and find you again? in the cool, little Pcol,

IIO

in the cool, little fool, in the cool, little Pool, and the dimness?

IV.

Wrinkled with worry? for whom, say whom? The wind, in a flurry was rough, in a huff, and sprinkled your lap full of bloom? The bushes were shaken, the blossoms fell,and the wind has taken a rude farewell? Yes, the wind was rough, in a pet, and a huff, so he shook down the blossoms, and look! Down, away goes a fleet of blossomy ships, that circle and meet as the current slips; Ho! that 's where the gnats go cruising. 'T is Xerxes again his millions of men

O the jolly holiday! Madcap Molly, Dolly, and May, have completely forgot you already for the blossoms that dot you and eddy, little Pool, in your waters cool. I've an inklingunafraid, in a twinkling, they'll wade and spatter the spray in their eyes; and the fleet of bloom will retreat, and make room,nay, scatter pellmell if wise.

VI.

Not
a moment to lose.
Dresses tucked
up,
and shoes

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on the spot unlaced, stockings stripped in hot haste, willynilly, O me! Courage plucked up, and dipped are four sweet little feet, slap-dash with a splash in your waters clear, chilly, to ankle and knee. See . . . The ships one and all wheel away in the spray, where the fleet of their foes they meet (who knows?) or are wrecked I expect, at the fall.

VII.

Under the laurel
sits
Dolly—
stiff, prim,
at the sparkling water's brink:—
"It can't be moral,
it's
folly,

mad whim, bad

form to wade, I think in a pool that's freckled with blotches

of sun, speckled

with bloomdust and foamy with fun."
So, under the laurel

Dolly

watches and watches
(while blossom-rains reckless
make her a necklace
of white and pink
coral)
and Molly

she watches, and May she watches, do—things that should never be done.

VIII.

On my word! There's a bird comes hop-hop to her side:-"I'm eager, dear Madam, to win me a bride, as all men since Adam of spirit and pride. It surely won't hurt, while May and Molly wade for us two to flirt in the gay laurel-shade. You are pretty, Miss Dolly,-

I'm witty and pert:

so a marriage, I think, might be made.

Water's my drink.

I dare

to assert

I am sober, fair-

minded and staid.

As I live.

I can't give

you, Miss Dolly, a ring;

but you know

I'm a beau,

and just hear how I sing.

I'm a catch-

for I snatch

with my beautiful bill

a worm!

(See him squirm.)

Come, Miss Doll, say 'I will,'

then I'll build you a nest

of the neatest and best,

and of worms I shall see that you have your sweet fill."

She is playing, Aunt Bess,

so

I know

She'll say "Yes!!!"

I guess

she

is willing.

Sir

Robin is wooing.

(Don't stir.)

They are billing,-

see,
billing
and "cooing."

Ha, ha, but it's only the dream
Dolly dreamed in the laurel-shade.
And she's waked by a laughter scream
of Molly—poor lonely old maid!

IX.

"O dear little Pool, in the glen clear, ccol— O when shall we see

see

you again? Freckled

with blotches of golden sun,
speckled

with bloomdust, foamy with fun. You've made us so jolly,"

cry gay May and Molly.

"We're ever so glad that we've met you.

But who 'll, little Pool, say who 'll, little fool,

with blossoming laurels around you,

O who 'll, little Pool, who 'll, who 'll, little fool, forget you

who once has found you?"

"No, we'll never, never forget you. We are ever so happy we met you.

> We've had a good time and will end this Rime . . .

O the bad

wind, Miss Doll, to upset you!

But he did n't intend,
you know, to offend—

nor even to tease you or fret you.

And we both have to thank
you because on the bank
you watched our stockings and shoes.

But you're crosser and stiffer than Aunt, when we differ from some of her "proper views."

So Miss Dolly Dot from France,

we dare n't coax or pet you;

and you're not quite

polite to refuse

to resuse

to excuse

us-

seeing only by chance 't is we've wet you!

HIGH IN THE COLORADO ROCKIES

A PHANTASY

"Alas, the fancy cannot cheat so well,
As she is famed to do, deceiving Elf!"—Keats.

THE MOUNTAIN PARK

Ha! the little aspenwood
twinkling, merrily twinkling
in the golden sun;
with never a wiseacre inkling
there's aught in the world to be done:
for life—'t is so blessedly good
to a gleeful little aspenwood
twinkling, twinkling.

Ha! the madcap mountain brook
flashing, splashing uproarious
under blue spruce and pine;—
Forever the sun, victorious,
changeth water to sparkling wine;
so he drinketh in a dewy nook
of his own changed self, the brook,
drunken-glorious. . . .

Ha! the peaks of jaggèd rocks
skirted with granite drapery
of the landslide red,
scaled by the agile and tapery
forest which knoweth no dread
of th' tempest's glary locks
that enmantle the sunsmit rocks
with splendors vapory!

II.

THE CABIN

And near the little aspenwood atwinkle, atwinkle under the beetling crags, by the brook with its hurdygurdy roars, its sturdy, wordy brags,

its harmonic tinkle-tinkle where it boisterously lags:

What clumps of the columbine, scores and scores,each a stately fairy grove; their fivefold horns of plenty, fashioned fine, white and mauve: (Bells to peal the frolic pieties of sunbright butterflies in bridal flight to a dizzy azure height.) What fragrant cyclamen, in moist societies mossy-shod, purplish-crimson, the water, aswirl, spray-spattering over-brims on! What hosts cerulean of the penstemon arrayed from the ruddy roots of the defiant giant pine, up the slope in sun and shade;like a tract of clear noonsky it is, reflected in a cool grass-bordered pool. What strawberry bloom hoar-frosts the ground, to stretch the laggard limbs on, while the soul reposes in the balmy heat, day-dreaming out an aerial Shelleyan song, a sensuous Keatsian ode. What bearberry bushes blossom-snowed;and everywhere brier roses, heavenly-sweet, brier-roses, brier-roses!

And near the little aspenwood atwinkle, atwinkle under the beetling crags, by the brook with its hurdygurdy roars, its sturdy wordy brags, its harmonic tinkle-tinkle where it boisterously lags:

nestled in the coziest of dingles, where roses be the rosiest, jaunty with green-stained shingles, perks alone the log cabin; its chimney of rude stone since day broke. bannered gay with turquoise smoke. Yet, not alone, for the cows with steaming muzzles, leisurely stray, the while they browse and look wise as their world-old wont and use is; and the crested mountain-jay, a sapphire flash, screeching flies to the twilight silver spruces; and the rabble, gobble-gabble of the 'pies, "The top of the morning" come officious to wish us! And the wrens, wee but bold, on the eaves (their sunrise song half sung, anxious for their young) at the chattering, clattering thieves scold and scold; till the cow that never worries never hurries. hooks the pasture gate wide open, shaking loud her brazen bell, and the speckled woodchuck pert inquisitive, alert, panic-stricken, hurries, scurries,

his hermit cell to mope in, for a spell till all be well!

And near the little aspenwood atwinkle, atwinkle under the beetling crags by the brook with its hurdygurdy roars, its sturdy wordy brags, its harmonic tinkle-tinkle where it boisterously lags:

Lo and hark, free from care and cark the Children (invisible childwings outspread for flight, like forest-bred bright wild things frollicking, rollicking!) make-believe a gracious queen and jolly king hold revels, whereto all airfolk be bidden who fight red bogymen and green-eyed devils, (in bogs, like frogs, in hollow logs, in valley-fogs hidden). And the airy reel they clasp and gasp in among the aspen, (fact and whimsical fancy jumbled) on scary nightmares is ridden:

wayward drollery gay cajolery, laughter outcries, dafter shrieks, dancing eyes and flushed cheeks, amber curls in the wind tumbled; the while, upon the porch reclined, their Mother lounges, heart and mind in that far-off land ever nigh at hand. where friendly sprites in sunbow vesture. warble and flute your blessed future, with mimic gesture and rare delights for spirit-eye and mystic touch. But the children, their orgy ended-(Ah, she loves them so proudly much!) have flown past her, (fast and faster the hill ascended). pine and blue-spruce cones to gather; till, their useful ardor spent, they 'll wade in sun and shade, and the pool's cold crystalline surface over sand and pebble stones, kick to yeasty sheeny lather; and with handfuls of fool's goldtheir pretended rage to ventpelt whatever rogue is of the bogies gruff enough to scowl and growl;the while their Mother dreams, dreamssmiles and beams, proudly, happily, blessedly content.

III.

SCHERZO

Ah, my Goddess, lounge and dream beautiful, endued with dignity and peace supreme, in thy vasty solitude,

for I am soon, so soon, so soon to be with thee;—and live that hundredth blessed honeymoon the fates have sworn to give.

Thou art as Isis veiled to all—save one, miles, miles away.

Canst thou not, Goddess, hear him call?

Wilt answer if he pray?

Black wondrous eyes, remotely ashine, reach to her worshippers. Hands clasped beneath her head, are mine, though ever divinely hers.

Lips vaguely smile, and dare demand if tired I wax of life; of life with her—you understand a Goddess for a wife!

O little twinkling aspenwood, foot me a frantic fling, to the brook's handclapping, be so good, a swirling emerald ring!

And you, big, rhythmic spruces, hop, wave fringèd sleeves in time, mock-ceremonious curtsies drop, and the rocks like wild goats climb!

Hail down your cones, you bellowing pines, your scraggly noddles wag,— jerks, quirks, ventriloquous groans and whines, in a Bacchic game of tag!

For she, our Goddess, asks—she, She of the compelling eyes,— if weary of life with her we be—with her—and archly sighs!

Hark, the cowbell 't is the tuning-fork; and cheerily the sky splits from San Francisco to New York in outrageous laughter fits.

With pyrotechnical display the cloud-devils kick their heels, and the mountains echo monstrously panic, Titanic peals!

For we be weary of life, alas, and chiefly of life with her; to a better world we fain would pass; so, there (as here) she were!

IV.

BY THE BROOK

Today in your broidery, beautiful witch, take not a cunning amorous stitch.

No broken needle, no tangled thread; no poem or novel this noon may be read.

Away with the Brownings and Merediths! not Morris, even, glad maker of myths.

Whitman and Ibsen their say have said, and, like naughty children, are sent off to bed. Down, down, to the brawly brook, methinks, 't were pleasant to stroll o'er the briery links.

The sweetness of scent, the soft underfoot, each flowery patch in his own place put

for the dearest joy of the passing eye— Down, down to the brook and ask not why,

where the silvery blue-spruces of violet shade have for You a moss-paved privacy made.

Those superfluous garments (be sure, no loss) will be stealthily laid on the velvety moss.

And lo! a holier power you wield as in womanly grace you stand revealed.

The wind, loose masses of auburn hair about your bosom will playfully flare.

Apocalypse rare—beheld of none but you—and the seer—and the hallowing sun!

V.

THE CURTAIN FALLS

Ah, you fade faint, far, even as I look into the night;— only the evening star sullenly smoulders, grim, half-extinct, upon the gruesome, fell, uncanny lake, where the murk waves break.

Lonely, afraid—where are the brawly brook, the aspen light,

with many a battle-scar the battered boulders, the spruces close enlinked, and the Dian of the spell, for whose dear sake my senses and spirit ache?

VI.

"SO LONG!"

Hallucination?
Solitude,
ah, utter, utter . . .
Two thousand miles divide us;
and weeks, weeks
to yawn in, dawdle and foolishly yearn,
and of hope and fancy and guess
run daily the maudlin gamut. . . .

Come, resignation!
Fortitude!
Why murmur? mutter?
The fates do not deride us;
for the bland Stoic speaks
of discipline, lessons to learn,
perfection . . . yet, nevertheless
in very sincerity—damn it!

IMPROMPTU

To common Seekers—nothing but a drop of water, shaken on a clover's head of purple bloom, near which the sparrows hop in glee that they are feather'd well, and fed; to Roamers, there, at loving distance—stop!— a tear of heaven, a star of holy dread— And yet, the best is never seen, or said.

THE BOOK

OF

SYMBOLIC ODES

"For whatever man doth long envisage he transfigureth to human semblance, hearkeneth oracles of his destiny in river and wind and sea."

" Man is still in his childhood.

He has to imagine what the angels would say, so that his own good impulses (which create those angels) may gain authority.

His moral life, to take shape at all, must appear to him in fantastic symbols." Santyana: Life of Reason.

FOREWORD

Day by day I ask my question—
in every glance of my eyes it is;—
but never the Answer—no suggestion
of the mystery to me of mysteries.
You stars, you would tell me I am star?
and you trees,—that I am tree?
you clouds,—that I am all you are?
you seas,—that I am sea?
you mountain peaks,—that I am high?
you flats,—that I am low?
you sunny sky,—that such am I?
But still my soul saith "No!"

Alone at length my Self I face:

—"None knoweth but thou. Speak out!"

—"I am all that is. I am time and space, thy faith I am—and thy doubt!

Tho' I am that I am; 't were truer to say that—I am not yet: the wooed, the wooing, the wooer—creditor, debtor and debt.

"If still thou list to ask,
know, thine Answerer shall be dumb;
for, no word is his word, but a task—
a beauty thyself must become.

Yea, to know—is to be;—and alone
in being, must wisdom be sought.
What thou art—no more, may be known;
and the more?—thou shalt be,—or, is nought!"

THE LION

(An incident of the Zoological Garden of Cincinnati)

There, on the floor of thy cage Thou liest, O Lion, stretched out, indifferent! Vast head, with weight of portentous manea tangle as of autumn forests where the horror of jaws lurks in ambush; compact muscular legs, armed with death, in which the lightning of the fatal leap, the crack, the crash of the fall, the rending of flesh yet alive, slumber unquietly; tail with suppressed lash involuntarily vibrant; through eyes half-shut with cunning show of drowsiness the yellow flash, keen, like broken glitter in the moon-glare of little pools of steaming blood;-All, all betrays

What outrage to have caged Thee!

Yet, in thy bars take comfort.

Proffers of freedom were insult—
scorn of the harmless, the impotent:

subtly the soul of terror.

Men dread Thee!

But Thou—carest not if they quake, requirest no flattery of fears, sure of thy formidable strength,—indifferent, grand.

Ah, wherefore do we stop
in front of thy cage
bound by an evil spell?
Why this shudder at times
not of dread—this sense
of oppression, difficult breath,
unaccountable?
Whence this ache
of self-pity intense as we look
at Thee, fierce Brute,
caged Fiend of the wilderness,
at Thee?

Terrible! magnificent!

That leap, shaking the iron bars—
as reeds once by shrunk streams
where thy tongue of fire
lapped the cool;
the quick snakes of thy mane
erect, rigid,
quivering with wild might,
at the eruption of a roar,—
like fire volcanic
from bottomless deeps of fury
inflaming the sky,
charring the fruitful earth.

What is it
captive monster,
late so majestic, composed,
scornfully indolent?

A cub—set loose for sport of children a cub, astonished, stares in front of thy cage, by neat-trimmed shrubbery free?

Who shall utter, O Lion, thy stupor, agony, rage? One of thy kind-a cub-free? What?-The wilderness nigh? This fetid cage of shame-hallucination? Dens full of half-tame skulking beasts, howls, whines, snarls of feeding timean obsession? The day's peering merrymakers, (cowards who inspect with prudent insolence,)and the prowl that ends where it began in the close stench of the walled nighta hideous obstinate nightmare? Ah, 't is the Wilderness hath roused her to battlehath conquered civilization, at a bound come hither to rescue her caged King? Iron bars only-between Him andnot freedombut Her? The hot day's sleep, the night's fierce hunt, the fight to the death with rivals for the lioness, sleek, awaiting the issue with treacherous fawn, and leers of savage pleasure?

Only these bars—between Him, and—not freedom—but life?—Life?

Magnificent Captive,
Disdainer of liberty,
do I not understand Thee?

Am not I, too, caged?

Laws, customs, courtesies, proprieties!
I too—remember.

Not liberty, oh, not liberty now!
Why break through bars?
Prolonged despair hath cowed us both, and the tyranny of use.

What? Wreck our cage?

Where then would our Wilderness be?

The torrid sun, the fever?

Hunger for palpitant flesh, thirst for hot blood?

The icy night,

the blinding moon in the clear, the shadows black of rock and tree?

The prey terrified, the joy of his agony?

.

The antagonist's prowl, roar, ramp?

The ache, the bliss of omnipotent fierce life?

Only a minute the spell hath lasted—best, O Lion, we both were patient, spiritless, sleepy—sane!

May be, may be-

(the thought of it starts a shudder like death's clotting the heart's blood).

May be, may be—(who knows?)
only the semblance is left us
of fire

as of sunsets

were wanting.

that flare in the heavens, but singe not a stubble straw of the western hills.

May be—were the Wilderness here indeed, thou, O Lion, and I— even Thou, and I

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THE OLD HEMLOCK

Τ.

Stout-hearted, great Hemlock, wast thou foolhardy to plant thee on crags thus, waterworn, naked —

tusks of some monstrous
jaw from the deep tarn jutting; —
no soil save mould of thine own shed spines,
amassed in the snaky folds of thy huge
roots, that to clamp thee steadfast

the splintering rock enwrap.
So soon as I saw, uncouth
black Giant, I loved thee; and oft
couched me solitary
dream whispers to overhear
of thy stalwart soul — but in vain.

Dragon-flies quick, emerald-glinting, through swarms iridescent of dance-whirled gnats, darted; or, sparkles of turkis fire, settled gauze-winged on the moist stone a moment in a fleck of sunny sheen.

From the dense
laurel-thicket the titmouse
furtively flitted, seeking the green
gloom of thy shade, perched him to pipe
twitter and trill tenderly soft
songs of thy praise, meant for no ear
but thine!

Or, perchance, as I waited unseen, the fox-squirrels inquisitive, mischievous, sprightly, peered from their holes, cheeped, chirruped, fretted, flurried, whisked-up their tails, flirted from bough-end to bough-end, scampering, scolding, scurrying, in a dare-devil game of catch.

But ever, though affably tolerant, nay gracious, Thou stoodest, thy spirit methinks abode far alone, aloof, aloft,
rapt in the beauty stern, inexorable, everlasting, true
of the positive world;
thy bliss
too real, intense,
for frivolous dance,
frolic and song, or worship devout
in irreverent foolish words.

II.

Stark gnarly branches,
spotted with lichen hoar, and shagbearded, already thy spirelike
symmetry mar;
but old age
fondly of the past reminiscent,
dotingly garrulous, yet
for many a year
will not touch thy spirit;
then, oh,

of friendship wilt thou not tell one who loveth thee, whether,

when at first from a cleft in thy rock (than the cool mosses that slipper thy feet, scarce bolder of growth) thou didst peep curiously skyward; and after,

when the froward chokeberry bushes that jostled and pressed thee, proudly thou couldst overpeer at length and outreach;

whether, dear Tree,

in the drowsy noon-sun thou never,
didst day-dream, foolishly day-dream
of stretching, a benison mute,
thy hundred long-sleeved arms patriarchal, solemn,
over the tarn as now —
warden august of its peace?

For, irresistibly, hither
happy day-dreamers are drawn
to sit them down and muse,
in fancied fellowship close with thee,
of possible things that will not,
of things impossible
that must come, surely, to pass.

III.

Howbeit, - taciturn Sage, noble, austere,the subtle fragrance inspiring of thy forest-breath sweet; Do not deep impulses stir in us strangely, disrupting the arid crust of our work-a-day self? Resolutions spontaneously well up, abundant and pure, to refresh it and deck it with verdure of hope? And trust (like thine own, sublime) in the universe, soar overhead - a vast sky? Our life-love, ardent, out of darkness and cold burst ablaze sunlike its azure ascending? And our baser desires shoot upward till, scintillant points, they dartle on our dark hours of bewilderment spiritual rays heavenly impersonal, starry remote? For lo! a Symbol, a Glyph of a lore Thou art, which our spirit unwittingly spells: how Might, Self-lordship, Soul-greatness, are got of a wilful stand, reckless, unshaken, in hard barren places;
Ay, are got of savage war waged —
brute man with stubborn things
and forces undying and tireless — overcome
to renew, (fierce, treacherous,
cruel,) the strife;

are got of uprearing sore-battered a crest, defiant to blast and bolt,—

no fate dreaded but shame of cowering, doubt of the glory, and cavil at the absolute right of the Order eternal;

are got of outspreading magnanimous arms abroad to shelter, benign, all that is guileless and true, lovely and glad;

are got, O venerable Tree,
of fixedly viewing as thou, (undaunted, though awed,)
yon infinite expanse (terrific to puny
folk centered in self, and vain)
which floateth ever forever
unconscious, calm, beautiful, holy,
a myriad, myriad suns!

Which, beholding long, thou hast meted justly thy height—found it naught, yet much;

and foreknowing thy natural doom art complacent;

too honest to feign
craven and false comforts;
nor minded,
having taken to withhold; out of pride—

eager to give and forgive!

IV.

Wherefore in vision prophetic Thou viewest, (storm felled, or thy grasp on the rock age-loosened) fallen,—idly float—

root-moored or wind-drifted—Thyself:—
fostering, feeding
with thy hardily-wrought fibre of life
mosses and ferns, orchids and grass,
parnassia with cups white and green
quaint-carven of five petals;
yea, chokeberry shrubs,
thy earliest foes; honey-flowering
azaleas, glossy-leaved laurels, rhododendrons
tortuous-wooded, pompous-blooming;

impartially kind to whate'er
Faith sowed or wind's Whim
to sprout, shoot, bud, and fruit,
on Thee, their rich isle of the Blessed;
with forbearance high-hearted, abiding
patient the day,

when water-soaked wholly in the long years, slow down Thou wilt sink — blissfully down — to delicious oblivion at last;

deep in the cool depths of the tarn, which all thy life through thou didst love, heroic, godlike Tree!

THE RIME OF THE TARN

I.

Darling little Tarn, with the dark woods girt, high up the steep old mount, solitary, kithless; winsome, waggish, pert; for thy bonny tricksy air where's the moralist would dare give account?

Since thou never didest act altruistic,

and thy nature ne'er was rackt with regrets, or passions mystic; unworried by the woes of the world, lying cuddled up and curl'd blithe, jocose, without faith or fealty, quite unaware of wrong and right;-Nay, so frivolous and gay as to dance all day, yea, and the whole night thro' too;---For, whoso will may hark, and, envying, hear thee mark with lapping lightsome laughters mad-cap time;

ignorant of bygones, incurious of hereafters, in wily happy innocence sublime!

II.

Darling little Tarn in the forested wilds, assuredly thy heart is a child's, a child's — irresponsible and vital,— giving, when it gives, without reck of requital; taking, while it lives, what it wants.

Yea, free as the breeze's, its favors and its taunts; it teases whom it pleases, whom it likes, heart-whole, will caress and cajole.

Vet when both it behaved

Yet when hath it behaved in thought, in word, in deed

(though all theories were

(though all theories were waived of morals bad and good) otherwise —
than as a tarn under deep blue skies
midmost of a dense old wood
should?

III.

Is thy virtue unpretentious, be thy principles less strict, because thou wast not e'er licentious nor by tempter's logic trickt? And therefore seest no merit, eh, in reasonless austerity? But if any have good right to preach and proselyte, if any might convert bad sinners and worse saints from wicked ways they're us'd to, it is Thou, little Tarn, brisk, nimble and alert, who, requiring no restraints, mightst commend them sans suspicion, shouldst thou choose to. Ah, thou dost not, wilt not heed,

thy "serious call" and mission, nor the world's bewildering need of some brand-new creed. Thou art, dear Tarn, thou "art,"

Thou art, dear Tarn, thou "art," and lo, it sufficeth thee; let Such as "have been" moralize, or Such as are "yet to be!"

Then, oh, if mortals could but master
the mystery, little Tarn, of thy moods!
For the noblest,—courageous in achievement,
bereavement,
disaster,—
lose buoyance
of soul,
self-control,
at the daily-hatch'd broods
of annoyance;

```
the fret
      vexation.
      irritation,
      petty trifles beget!
And methinks,- as I see thee lie
  rippling,
  contentedly tippling
    (as tho' a flood
      sunkisst
      thy supply
      to renew)
the dew
  of the morning mist
  on leaftip condensed,
  on spine, grass-spear, frond, berry and bud-
  thy complacence
  comes of doing none obeisance,
  beholden
  unto none,
  not even the golden
  Sun!
    For, Thou askest no brook
      to come yodling and whooping
      and cheer thee,
      or drooping
      uprear thee;
    no rillet in ferny nook,
      (pretty lisper,)
      to whisper
      soft names that endear thee,
    go tickling
      the mosses, run trickling
      to clear thee.
    And when storm-racks rain-sagging
      scowling, bullying, bragging
      roar
      o'er
      the lowlands that flatten
       on the weather god's favor to fatten;
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thou flauntest thy blossomy rich array near to the mountain's top with a dainty insolent witchery, unwilling to beg thee a drop!

And why? In the deeps of Thee well-up bubbly springs of perennial jollity; whereat, on the sly, thou quaffest, winkest saucily, thinkest some naughty thought, blinkest and then—laughest, and drinkest again!

Howbeit, when in winter the summit savage cloud-hordes envelop— dost thou sing it, or hum it thy tune of delight, in defiance of the Giants and their ice-hearted might?

Nay! No swaggerer, churlish brawler,—
thou 'rt no blusterer, and bawler;
but seemlier far,
with the better part of valor — discretion —
thou meetest
and defeatest
oppression!

For so soon as ruffian winds come forth of the North wielding the sleet-lash to scar, driving flurries before them of snows—
(worries and woes to provoke thee willy-nilly and choke thee)
little Tarn, still stilly a smooth shiny sheet

thou dost over thee draw
from sweet head to sweet feet:
and whilst rifled
of its leaves,
stifled
in drifts,
the from forest aches,
heaves,
grieves, and uplifts
its arms, with cruel icicles weighted,
to the hated

North-demons for ruth:

How the robins and I do wish us with Thee in thine inviolate dream-Eden, where the Tree-of-life grows for fancies to rest and nest, sing, feed and breed in; and the Fount of youth inexhaustible flows in four rivers of crystalline cheer!

But lo! When the spring-sun breaks thro' the welkin, and warm winds thaw about thee the missiles malicious of the storm and the gale,—my wise Tarn 'wakes in good sooth; and waters Thou hast to avail for the year, got without money or price

from thy jolly fool's-paradise!

Surely thy doctrine with tact is taught by thy practice:—
in days of dearth self-supplied

Bride
of mirth; —
in days of distress,
hid away in the deep
blessèd recesses of sleep!

No marvel the oaks, stout blast-fighters,- mail-clad trunk, limb, bough, in lichen; the stark black birches waving delicate fresh volumes of greenery; the chestnuts rough-barkt, bluff and burly up-thrusters in yellow-green clusters of burs; the hemlocks, late and early on guard o'er the gracious scenery, grim, glum, sullen, surly,vet kind to the wintering birds, who find, in their spiny dark, safe homes; the service-trees scrubby and gaunt that dangle, begrudged, their few pitiful pomes under foliage bluish, wizen and scant; the rhododendrons whose firm gnarly wood, aslant in snaky tangle, shows how arduous (tho' they rant not, nor wrangle as we), even 'mong tree-folk and shrub-folk the search is for Light each with his bad and his good, his record of wrong and of right come marshall'd in deep ranks close-serried to take solace in Thee, the Light-hearted, the glad!

v.

No marvel the jaunty-fronded rowan, bronze-berried at first, then aflash with sumptuous carmine, which, prodigal, he tosses to the winds with a fling and a dash;

the hobble-bush lusty, astrain to display his flame-color'd drupes in rivalry futile; the slender merry wild-cherry, his spring-radiance departed, retaining yet a tender subtle grace of his own; the marrish-maple, whose mere poise, airy, unwary, there's charm in, and comeliness, dancing alway, impatient to don frory glory; the highland-holly, that to-waterward stoops and a covert overbow'rs with lucent ruby fruit bejewel'd; the laurel, wayward, rash that leaps from his root whilst, in lieu of his long-shed waxen flow'rs, every leaf of him agloss is with sallies of sunshine; the modest azalea, unqueen'd for the season, to the sorrow of mid-June having cast off too soon her orange, or white-and-rosy regalia; the green-brier belated, and inquisitive to boot, that in pricklytickly festoon o'er his fellows goes tumbling pellmell; No marvel at all if they throng at thy marges, each pressing his suit for one boon: -a first and a last sight of Thee who art free, gay

as they:

who grantest great largess,
yet makest no debtors
(since to all, what is thine doth belong)
allowing no inferiors, no betters,—
preferring not these unto those
in thy childish millennial polity;
because ever a jest
sets the worst and the best
at one in the throes
of true jollity!

VI.

No marvel, dear Tarn, thou canst cause the dead trees on thy surface affoat to nourish such wild-flowers as flourish not elsewhere so fair or so dense -(frolic mummers in the summer's lush pageant, to thy playful applause enacted,) - for note: the neighborly masses of bugle-weed shaking their knots of silvery bloom-dots on the least little breezy pretense; and the zephyrous tassel'd swamp-grasses, and fretted ferns in narrow room shut, whom the rank rabbit-root, (adept in rudeness,) with his new-got black berry astrut, tries to jostle; that droll tiny fellow (dwarf of St. John's-wort yclept) who, to honor his namesake apostle, starrily decks his crown with wee specks golden-yellow; and greenwood orchis with dare-devil air, and highborn parnassia of her style half aware;

O, how in thy waggish society
stern
Death,
dear Tarn, doth learn
to laugh at himself under breath
in a cantless, new, beautiful piety,
even gruesome, cross, scarecrow old Death!

VII.

No wonder if the Sun from his high skymansion, sends rays of his fire white-hot, to drench them, and quench their thirst, with thy stored hoard of purity, cool!

No wonder the Moon should draw mistily nigh wistfully nigher, when scarce-fledged lovers feel at thought of their blissful futurity (sweet fool with sweet fool) on thy bosom together, strange awe as Thou dancest thine elvish reel: diamond sparkle, quick glint, phosphorescent quicker flicker. iridescent opal shimmer, quiescent, deliquescent dim, dimmer gleam and glimmerand darkle!

No wonder the Stars as they peep through the cirrous dome

from the deep
of infinite space,
their home,
fondle thy fresh still face
without wrinkle,
and mirror in Thee their heavenly twinkle;
No wonder the Thunder-fiend perched on the peak
howling.

owling, growling

to wreak
his pent might,
flings a steely white lightning to smite thee
and affright thee,
and roars out for boyish delight
at the blinding blaze
of thy swift indignant amaze,
his vicious ill-humor quite

No marvel that the Dawn

gone.

ere the least
first streak
in the East,
that betokens earth's yearning,
broadens, corruscates and flares—
(the path of the Sun-lord's returning
to strew opulently with auroral
floral

splendors,)
ay, no marvel that the Dawn
doth lavish alone on thee

her first faint most orient hues

to enkindle the haze of thy grays,

or thy satiny blues to suffuse,—

hallowing thee unawares frivolous tho' thou be,

Thee, little Tarn in the mountainous wild,—
that dost make thee Olympian mirth
of men's notions of fitness

and worth,
immortal sure Witness
to the truth
and the youth
of the earth;
thy soul unafraid,
undefiled,—
forever a Maid
unfading, unplight—
forever and aye
at play,
an innocent Child,
and a sprite!

THE DEFILED MOUNTAIN TORRENT

I.

Cloudily wing'd, forest-man'd, side by side
o'er the green-and-yellow checker of tillage
alluvial, and the hummocky fallows copse-mottled, asprawl
in the sun and abask,—unwieldily
approximating their contorted ridg'd bulk,—

in the shelter of their scarpt flanks

a seclusion inviolable create
for some blessed cool Glen to lurk in,
from the rays of torrid noons fended,
and the irruption of hurricanes
malign.

Some Rivulet, indubitably, in his infantile innocence disporteth him, rollicking from clear pool to clear pool; and gleesomely loitering in his eddies he chuckles to himself at the play of the silver-sheeny trout, rosy-speckled.

And, oh,

'twixt these imminent declivities with underbrush bristling, by the rank lush verdure close-thatcht,

what abode

for the bob-white dainty-stepping, and the grouse bronze-rufft, with fife and with drum, to foregather and revel it in security, life-lusty;

and here, too, timorous fugitive, can the cotton-tail claim sanctuary, and the hazards forgetting of existence one instant frisk wantonly, or nibble at ease.

For with what bountiful supply doth not hospitably the Glen her visitors entertain; herbs aromatic, spicy-nutrient roots, and berries in succulent luscious plenty divers-flavor'd, sweet and tart, to each taste!

II.

On, on will I hasten, yet discreetly sure-footed, and circumspect, that, by the timidest denizen undetected, I may penetrate into the privacies sacred erstwhile to the horn'd and hoof'd goat-thighed God Pan; and, (tho' it was rumor'd that from earth He be departed, to reside in the Olympus snow-capt of Mythology, scared by the scowl of lean-featur'd Science) devoutly, his blithe choristers, of manifold wild minstrelsy, will, I hope, have outstayed him:first and foremost, the wee wood-sprite, shy and saucythro' the bracken aflit, or dartling some mossy-carpeted log alongthe winsome winter-wren. O might I but surprise him at his hyper-riotous up-bubble of mirth!

Or if not him, then, eavesdropping,
the dusky-green vireo overhear,
as solitary he setteth him to rebuke
with a vivacious virile vocalism the querulously
iterant soft plaint of the peewee,
perverse shadow-haunter, in woodland mazes sun-proof;
or, (oh, supreme unanticipated delight!)
transfixt with a thrill of surprise—
stand and hearken (as if pain, age and death
concern'd us not ever) the hymn
of love's true-mated hermit—th' tiny thrush:
a peace superlunary, archangelical, divine,
into melody molten, cool, diaphanous,
soul-uplifting to a jubilant content.

III.

O pugnacious spiky locusts, cross brambles, briers choleric and churlish, wicked virulent nettles, coarse tight-tangling grasses, less obstreperously might ye I believe withstand one that forward thro' your thickest presseth with no malevolent intent;

for soonest exultingly my heart beats
when nigh me some relative of mine—queer, canny
fifth cousin, say, or sixth—unconstrain'd
in bush, brake, water, air,
I may watch at his frolicsome gambols,
or the serious avocations of his life.

Never fancied I
glory could be gotten in the slaughter
of a terrorized brother, outwitted,
worsted in a conflict unscrupulously unequal.

Come, come,

be ye civil to a friend who hath given you the password, and we will let bygones be bygones, my irascible stout fellows, as I slip me quietly atiptoe thro' your belligerent throng motley. For I swear

O outposts over-zealous of the Glen, unharmed, nay, unthreaten'd, shall they be all my kindred, feathery, furry, or finn'd—the lords hereditary of your fortified recesses.

IV.

What? Hist! On the wind—
is it a cry? Nay, a brawl rather and a bellow,
a roar—a thunder-burst of waters!
The Glen

I foreknew (from excessive sun-ardors by hemlocks umbrageous, and adventurous birches leafily screen'd);

ay, the Glen meandering
scathless and free among huge
crags by some cataclysmical upheaval of the earth
asunder-cloven, wrencht, shatter'd, jamm'd
in ages prehuman:—
cliff-walls

whose least ledges cracks and crevices by rash ferns, vertiginously aquiver, are tenanted,—
or by shrubbery gorgeous-blooming,
and by intricate viney entanglements
precipitately down-tumbling, that athwart
the chasm green arms wavy and hands
amicable, extended to one another in impetuous
felicitations, at the faintest whiff of air,
almost touch:

O, the Glen

so bewilderingly beautiful, labyrinthine, sequester'd, (strange, strange!) is not the happy channel, as I imagin'd it, of a brooklet splash-plashing bubble-babble, sing-song, in excess—aspatter and aspirtle—of delighted limpidity; but instead—

a rocky-barr'd keep, subterranean kennel, for some Leviathan terrific-

dementedly pounding in self-annihilatory desperation, up-panting a convulsive dank blast demoniacal, to set the vasty scar-fastnesses ashudder from the bottom to the top!

V.

Best-lov'd, first-Begotten of the sky,
foster-child of the mountain,
what is it with impunity doth afflict thee?
Thee, who the very hemlocks wouldst—enormous,
majestical,—deracinate in a trice
and voluminously overwhelm them,
resisted they thy thoroughfaring;

O Thou

who the rugged adamantine granite grindest with the pulses of thine onslaught spasmatic and the unintermittent wash swift of multitudinous swirling waters;

O Thou.

tho' utterly thou scornest to be commiserated—speak, speak!

For, notwithstanding

thou tossest yonder downfallen giant bole sore-batter'd of a sycamore, frivolously, as a mere flocculent scum-raglet; and, at his antics uncouth (when frantical, for some stay, clutching, he writhes, lurches and lumbers down thy rapids) inebriate with wrath, dost into laughter vindictive break hideously;—

Nevertheless vet

there abideth in the occult deeps of man a spirit that, insurgent, mightily to thee-ward yearneth.

Then, oh, utter

I supplicate, nay adjure thee, thine innermost rancor incommunicable!

For wrong'd, wrong'd, yea, wrong'd art Thou if aright

the tremulous overtone I interpret, and the mutterings—
unpremeditated, inadvertent, mysterious,
abysmical—that perturb
with a panic the hearer;
those wails, sobs
pitifully human, half-supprest, yet thro' the din
audible in a ghostly suspiration,
as Thou rumblest,
and from rock-level to rock-level
down precipice after precipice
crashest in cataracts horrisonous, suicidal,
lacerating thee to grisly froth-shreds,
and soul-seething, Thou hissest and up-spewest
haggard, awful,
an insensate contempt of Thyself!

VI.

Behold, for a space farther forth the ravine wide-yawns and admitteth the sun to irradiate thee with diamantine splashes of living splendor.

Quick thither

am I wending through close-twisting masses of blossomy laurel, over root-claspt rocks, moist and slippery, about trunks of hemlocks colossal, and there, quieted for an instant, may thine ire get articulate expression.

What meaneth it?

Speak! Assuredly,—an ocular illusion? in the shine thy swollen floods effervescent whirl golden, and regurgitate bronze-umbery, russet-shimmering in the distance?

Too well

have I understood thee now, Thee and thy dire speech—O Thou, who hadst dedicated thy Self to maintain thee unpolluted the purity of thy origin, and the rivers, whereunto thou shalt be tributary, so much as in thee lieth with thy crystalline onrush to clarify,

and the ocean's

brackish wallow and welter, if it were possible, to sweeten with thy savor of sky—

O Thou, Thou even, Thou also hast altogether forfeited thy hyaline pellucidity, befoul'd turbid, yea, maculate! maculate!

And as a nightmare again horrifies, remember'd,

lo, the Mill

that bestrode thee intercurrent between slopes once thick-wooded—where before me it squats, as when I quicken'd my pace endeavoring not to see or hear aught:—

the loathsome canker-Monster omnivorously ravening into the sacred dense evergreen gloom.

And mine ears, in despite of me, the shrill shrieks of the steam-whistle affray; and the screech and the howl of the rotatory saws terminating in a raucous death-rattle and fierce rasp; and the wheezy respiration of the engines rust-pockt; and the clatter interminable of shingles and plank.

What scragg'd piles

of stript tanbark beatle and totter akimbo! What mounds funereal of sallow saw-dust, wind-fretted, thy gorge choke-up, and throttle to strangulation!

Obsess'd am I by the groans of timber-loaded wanes, lashes of the whip-thong, and the strain intolerable of starv'd mutilated brute flesh—blood, sweat, obscene jest and profanity!

O Brother, spare me thy reproach, for too keen mine abhorrence of the desecration that hath been committed

by greed-craz'd human kinsfolk I disown—
(no fellows they of mine!)

Yea, yea I saw them—
and still see them in memory,—those archways
gothic-pointed of laurel, demolisht by fiend-fires:
black skeletons that convulsive coil and crook them
in a drunken death-dance; and the soil, see,
charr'd, to an aching waste lye-bitten,
where it gapes sunward, ghastlily!

And within me

my spirit groaneth, outrag'd at the fatuous devastation of the Earth our long-suffering Mother humiliated, sacrilegiously defil'd by the very children of her heaven-hallow'd womb!

VII.

Woe, woe is me—not unseldom,

O Torrent of savage sorrow unassuageable,
was I madden'd with thy phrenzy ere this—
fanatical, at thought of the despoilers, the deflowerers,
the devastators! Nor thou only
hadst to suffer contamination, and of miscreants
the cynical unconcern.

If it listeth thee,—inveigh,
and the turbulence of thy distress ease,
by imprecatory bursts of vehemence—
ineffectual, alas!

Ejaculate, O ejaculate,
in the paroxysms of delirium, thine anathemas;
and I will abase me, shamefast
in thy presence, to hearken:

"Man, Man,"
thou criest out with voice of great grief
unsubduable yet chasten'd, transmuted
to rage prophetic:
"Man, Man,
whom for æons on æons
We of the ancienter order elemental,
rapturously expectant, did adore;

instantaneous his insight and unerring, omnipotent the pressure,

unimaginable the dexterity of his miracle-working hands;

Man, Man, magnanimous (woe, woe!)

we had imagin'd him, lofty-tempered:

Mind, discerning of the Process creative

the implicate ends; supreme

Will, by glad godly indefatigable labors fashioning into a reality of unillusory loveliness, our vision long-worshipt

of the world:

Man, Man . . .

and oh, lo!—he hath appear'd and we have beholden him: no divinity

but a Demon—tempter, torturer, corrupter—no law venerated that prohibiteth

a gratification instantaneous of his glutton craz'd desires;—

Man, Man-

oppressor without scruple of the weaponless and confiding:

extirpator of the formidable

frank-hearted, noble-spirited, that stoop them not to be yokt and made vile;

sparing only

that thenceforward thy soul may in orgic massacres delight itself;

vandal-violator

of beauty wrought solemnly thro' the centuries and slow, for Thee, ingrate, to marvel at and rejoice in;

O Man!-

forever must thy tyranny be irresponsible to reason, right, ultimate self-interest?

Wilt thou persist.

in the ruin,—maniacal ravager,—of thy heritage—the one star of thy birthright?

Dost thou dread not

the degeneracy of thine imperial

breed, and at naught settest thy destiny of Godhood? No premonitory misgivings, ere yet it be too late, wilt thou give ear to? And wilt then dare in after ages, (Fool! Fool!) when self-doom'd thou art perishing, at the mirth-twinkling heavens to vent thee in maledictions preposterous, becausethe old bosom forsooth, scarr'd, bruis'd, gore-bedaobled, of thy Mother will not foster more, and rear as of old, thy pullulent generationsthe Mother (loving, responsive to her offspring until cold at the last, stark, dead), of Thee, slain-blind, ruthless, false Son!"

VIII.

Sad Misanthropist sublime, comfort thee, comfort theefor high above thy final leap and lunge, horrific, into the chasm, forever vortically to engulf thee from sight of thyself and the dizzy-swaying sun,-Canst thou see not how a bare bough intrepidly thy spray-cloud overreaches, and the arching prism-splendors that environ and enaureole thy hoar stormy-lockt head calamitous?---Behold (if but a moment thou wilt allow thee to be distracted from thine anguish) how a Bird percheth him on the lichen-hair'd tipmost twig-(what, dost thou recognize not thy well-wisher?) brown-speckled, buff-breasted, rufous-green-wing and tail!

'Tis, O Joy!

the Swamp-angel, the diminutive Throstle of the solitude—

and to capture thy notice, thro' the vibrating azure, in quick loops aerial, he wingeth him,

and returneth undaunted again

his word of consolation to deliver—for see, see! he warbleth now some dithyramb unimpassionately

voluble—a pæan of victory 'tis, spiritual, for thy hearing;

and the strains,

in the boom of thine uproar inaudible, my heart echoeth:—

"Hark, hark,

wert Thou still uncontaminate as erst (O mountain Torrent,—hearken, hearken, and take comfort!)—not so dazzling were the whiteness of thy bubbly foam;

nor thy spray-mists,

wind-agitated, were fret elusively with such palpitant sun-glories;

nor overspun with vivid frostwork so lacily were thy cataracts, evermore spirting sparkles, and outfraying into traceries iridescent of spume;

nor so ferocious ---

verily, verily-were

thy denunciations hurl'd at Evil, earthshaking, hoarse-reverberant under hollowed-out silvery-oozing and dribbling mosst scars; nor would gusts so irresistible set adance

the leafage on the tree-tops, in jubilation that they hang beyond reach utterly of all soilure;

Nor were the flaming sunflower, and, fragrant, the raspberries with their wild-rose bloom purple, and the constellated aster yellow-cor'd, lavender or milky petall'd,— thus regally invested, transfigur'd with such crystalline, rainbow radiant array;

Nor below, where forespent thou tarriest a while gasping for wrath-respite, and thy anarchical yeasty turmoil out-smoothens to an ominous glassy glare,—

wouldst Thou spread so burnished a mirror as now (of thy very swarthiness clearer) for sun, stars, luminous clouds and the ardent firmamental still blue!"

IX.

Comfort thee, comfort thee
implacable defil'd Torrent,
for thy Consoler
carolleth, still carolleth,
the transparency thou shalt yet achieve thee
of thy purificatory fury
at pollution.
Thine thine

Thine, thine

(so he singeth faith-exuberant)
shall a virgin Immaculacy
more miraculous than erst be;
and brave-soul'd shalt thou bear it to the ocean—
the vast, bitter and foul ocean,—
that at least
by so little it may the sweeter,
the clearer be.
Nor for naught

shall thine agoniz'd mad curses to the welkin have forth-thunder'd. For there cometh, oh there cometh (hear, hear him at his ultimate fugue ecstatic!)

the Man of thy holy hope — He
the expected, the worshipt, the fulfiller;—
of his advent divine, the foreordained

times shorten'd,
with the cry
uninterrupted, savage, fearful, of thy desire,—
O defil'd mountain Torrent, inspir'd
Prophet of evil,—
by Thee!

THE MULE

A SUNRISE WHIMSY

Where spann'd the road lies by the massy iron bridge above the power-house with its perpetual wind-fluttered steam-banner,

I was sauntering ere fully yet day dawned, listless, of protracted toil weary, and despairing of sleep.

The wicked steely
glints of oil'd machinery
ponderous, at work
under scrutiny persistent of electric eyes
depending spider-like from roof-rafters,
haunted my mind uncannily;

till homeward I turn'd, and yonder, on the far side of the lower road-cut, the quarried hill, (gray, perpendicular, stubborn,) confronted me, crested

with a dusky hunch, gruesome, that at times seem'd to waver as to outline, and stir in lurches erratic on the uttermost sheer edge.

Still-standing, long fascinated,

I gaz'd; and at length
the dawn-gleams uncertain, reveal'd
tugging irreverently the patient hill's scalp
of rank weeds wiry,—

a Mule! And I mused straightway of the People, uncircumspect, feeding ever on the verge

of a civic abyss without light, nor feeling of any — great lack, for the tugging and the munching of the weeds! Suddenly, as intent at the creature I look'd,—that had ceas'd in his dignity symbolic to suggest aught vulgar, flippant, whimsical,—

a burst of bloody light volcanic (from some crater, so it seem'd, close behind him deep-yawning,) etch'd-out lean legs, downcast head, ears protuberant, ignominious tassel'd tail

the flush'd sky against, that enhaloed Him!

Wholly, however, was the Mule

at the grotesque weird silhouetting of his form undismayed; and graz'd on — for nowise the illumination, you conceive, marr'd the pungency acrid of the weeds!

And a laugh, bitter, unawares startled me (tho' my own) recalling how we prate — eloquently — about reform, progress, enlightenment (foolish self-deceivers!) and the sure holy common sense of arous'd public Opinion!

But lo.

from the body of the Mule, (as man's future political and social I pondered dejectedly,)

swift rays to the zenith upflew,

fan-like outspread; and at once the steam-banner, on the power-house flaunted, caught fire; and scurrying flufft cloudlets like a butterfly bevy, white-frock'd, of school-girls from class discipline releas'd, through the sky romp'd,—the fresh child's glow, of health in their cheeks.

Then the sun

red-golden up-bulged from eclipse behind the tassel-tail'd, droop-ear'd Beast of burden, and behold!

at last - it was Day!

O People, is it truth, sober? — or a mere sanguine self-delusion of minds foolishly millennial, (mad theorists!)—O People tugging, munching the weeds unconcernedly,—the faith,

that a Sun by thy ill-shap'n bulk, awkward, ridiculous. yet mask'd is;

a Sun

that even now, up-struggling to shine shortly shall the whole heavens enkindle to such blaze of great glory, as hitherto seer saw not in vision apocalyptic?

Fool! Fool!

to ask questions of Thee who art wont (not heeding star-gazers, nor prophets,) to tug away still, in the manner of thy hybrid folk time out of mind, industriously, at the scalp wiry-weeded of the doom'd quarry-hill!

ODE TO MOUNT PELÉE IN ERUPTION

(Not unmindful of Walt Whitman's "Dithyrambs")

I.

O awful Mount,
Long dormant, dead,
Thy vomited midnight dark,
Thy lurid locks of tangled lightning,
Those miles of explosive flame that licked up the shipping in
the bay as haywisps,
The incandescent rivers of rock as a network enmeshing thee,

The incandescent rivers of fock as a network eminesting thee,
The ocean-bed sunk, engulfing the seas, that the waters regurgitate asteam and abubble with heat,

The blizzard of ashes, and hail of boulders, The devastated city of careless ease afire, The crashing cathedral towers, timbers incinerated, masonry crumbling, metals molten,

The great cathedral square paved with corpses so thickly that they surge up erect in lifelike attitudes of horror,

Forty thousand souls, suffocated in their beds, charred in the open, sodden in the sizzling harbor brine,

Governor, policeman, sailor, fishmonger, banker,

Father and son, mother and babe at the breast, and the chubby little girl clutching her skirts—

All, all, alike;

The maniac murderer alone surviving to escape with a howl on the opening of his underground dungeon, and perish somewhere in the glare of thy demoniac eye. . . .

Ha! do these monstrous deeds of Thine mean nought to us, Nought to us, O Mount Pelée?

II.

The reptiles — venomous vermin — had forsaken thy fissures and crevices,

For they knew -

The cattle with a revivified instinct fought for freedom,

For they vaguely understood -

The populace, panic stricken, prayed to be allowed to flee and leave their all behind in the doomed city —

But prudent men of science,

(As a committee.)

Decreed there was no danger,

So the brave governor issued orders,

Reassured the rabble by his presence, and by the presence of his wife and children,

Wherefore they whom thou didst warn were cowed, were shamed into disobedience:

Then couldst thou, O awful Mount—vent of the infinite forces of earth—restrain thee no longer,

And thy incredible work of destruction was wrought in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye —

Earthquake, darkness, hell belched forth,

Chaos and desolation!

And men in far-off places all over the habitable globe,

Civilized males, munching cigars in their mouths, twirling cigarettes, or fingering pipes,

On the street cars, lounging in study chairs, or astride an office stool, or loafing in a taproom,

Declare: "There is no God,"-

None, for God would have assuredly have hindered thee, O Mount!

And some parson, supposing Augustine and Calvin in the divine counsels still,

With a long countenance cries out to his smug, money-getting, pew-rent-paying congregation:

"Behold — judgment on the unspeakable iniquities of that city!"

And the Pharisee, chewing the cud in the pew, whispers to his heart, "Amen," and devises all the while unconsciously

Some new penny-in-the-slot machine! Faugh!

IV.

O fools and heartless hypocrites,

Perverters of truth, and eloquent Job's comforters unto the dead,

Hearken a word in your secret ear:

Is it not expedient once in a while that our pride should be checked?

Our materialistic satisfaction with godless possessions disquieted?

That as we pile up our Babels, sink our mile-deep mineshafts, burrow our mole-tunnel under sea, cut out our sewer-canals of solid rock, and threaten the very home of the free winds with invasion,

We be forced to recall how vast the energy of the Stillness, The terror of the gentle Hush,

On which dartle the midnight stars,

On which the flood of golden sun down-poureth,

And the crystalline rains of spring?

Is it not well that forty thousand should perish now and then That the swarming Millions may hesitate a moment, and worship or blaspheme—

Their little self-confident, jocose, speculative intellect confounded,

Their heart, sensual or rebellious, clutched for a second by the dread of the Unknown?

Ah, was it not well?

V.

"Inhuman"? you shout—"inhuman"?
Absurd nonsense, friend!
Must we not all die, sooner or later die,
Cowards and courageous, fools and philosophers,
All the sons of mighty Mother Earth?

Must not the kindest of us die, and make griefs, cares, sorrows, dismays of soul, for those we love most, and cherish most tenderly?

Would you, friend, greatly prefer to succumb, Properly, in your bed, to invisible hosts of bacteria? Have you such a passionate predilection for germs?

Or would you choose rather, delicate friend, to be slowly exhausted by the labor of decent digestion — by the smack and non-assimilation of well-prepared victuals?

Or have you perchance a fancy for breathing out a dozen centuries or so between doze and doze,

The eyelids prudently uplifted as you peep through the lashes, for fear of wasted vitality?

God! are we men? women? boys? girls?

Or only worms, snails, jellyfish, sloths and alligators lethargic with a bellyful of dog?

VI.

Ah, death-dealer, terrible demon—

Monster-mouth of chaos, fire-spouter, sea-churner, uptearer of land and sky,

Thou at least hast roared out an emphatic Word, And forty thousand souls, brave and pusillanimous alike, With gasp, sigh, wail, howl, shriek, sob, choke, rattle, have uttered it with thee,

In chorus of sublime frenzy, prayer, childlike faith or rage! Oh to have perished, speaking that noble Word in unison with Thee!

If unable to speak it out clearly in life,

To have whispered it dying, as one of forty thousand swallowed up quick in hell:

"The inexhaustible universe!

The reserve of creative energy!

We-not the end of things!

The power, terror, beauty, glory, sublime majesty of God!"

VII.

Were that so cruel, dismal, vexatious an exit for a puny little human babe of the All Father?

O awful Mount, roar out again thy "No!"

Yet, hear - in spite of Thee

They persist in disagreeing with Us,

Awful Mount!

They prefer, really prefer, living on and on and dying useless! Being snuffed out some day insignificant,

Being buried at the expense of a weeping and bereaved family —

God help them!

June 22, 1902.

ODE TO PIKE'S PEAK

THE MOUNTAIN

I.— A

Above the billowy waste of plain —
the grey-green welter of grassy glare; —
with vivid miles of sunflowers splashed,
or marigolds and ox-eyed daisies,
with thistly-leaved white poppies, or starry mentzelias
foamflecked and dappled,
with velvety acres pearl-blue of the sage-brush
subtly hazed;

Oh, at every season, to have explored it lovingly, and feel its multitudinous life of bloom in eye and nostril linger!

To hear the meadow-lark,
uphuddled on the fence-post,
drop cheerily into the wind
monotonous gushes of delicious melody;
to watch the hawk at his vigilant
slow wheel in the dazzling air;
the prairie dogs scurrying holeward
through their villages of sandy mounds,
or on their haunches, like sentinels,

in the vibrant sunheat posted whimsically;

nevertheless from here -

as up we climb the bastioned bluffs,
its numerous miracles effaced from view and hearing;
only now an infinite spread of sea
far forth to the faint horizon-line
dizzily aheave; . . .

and above it,-

never can abate

the heart's first wonder, the mind's amazement! Insolent, serrated, abrupt, stupendous,

The Mountains;
vertically uphurled,

into the azure wedged,
buttressing their mightiest sublime One,
the noble high-soaring Peak,
loftily aloof,
roseate golden,
cloudy insubstantial,

Vast!

I.-- B

O erupted fury primeval, scragged fold of the earth's straining crust jammed skyward convulsively, through torrid ages on ages scarred and splintered of the storm-bolts, of the seething rain-floods scooped and carven; thy ribbed acclivities lacerated of sudden streams; the gorged torrents, infuriated,— wrenching, braying toppled masses, tearing ravenously granitic channels—grooves and ruts, troughs and gulches to deep-gaping dank cañons;

ages on ages in the arctic

ice-continent's boreal clutch,

of its glacier-tentacles constricted, gouged, crunched, ripped, mangled, ground; the wastage of the moraines in avalanches and landslides

tumbled thunderously plainward; ages on ages, the fierce hurricanes ablare with their sand-blasts,

their hurled gravel-hail rough-hewing thee,

till jaggèd tusks abraded, spires fantastical, crooked pinnacles, protrude vertiginously:

and dragonlike rags of monstrous rock corrugated, honeycombed, grotesquely gargoyled, rear and ramp terrific over thy precipitous slopes atilt;

O Mount immortal, serene,

scornest thou to wage war for thy life?

Beyond thy forested cones dishevelled,
and thy cupolas enormous withdrawn,
behind the embrasured bulwarks of thy foothills,

wilt thou resist not, at length aroused, the perpetual onset outrageous

of thine enemies?

Canst thou forever

brood awful

above thine own chaotic might omnipotent

moveless, impassive, rapt?

How deliberate
the approach, how many,
O Mountain, the footsteps
unto thy kingly high-seat!
Forth-thrown first to the fore
the sheer bluffs lift their parapets;
then, treeless, shrubless, the undulant
flats unroll them,

whereover heavy freights earthshaking
that bellow and snort,
seem but sooty worms awriggle;
whereon the city overcasting
her rectangular lattice of lawn-edged poplar avenues
is but a frivolous wooded patch of shimmer,—
so broadly liberal their expanse;

and, where the flats then decline
to a creek-bed, upswelleth
ruddy-soiled, scant-grassed, the mesa —
by murk scrub-oaks leopard-spotted,
with clustered yucca bespiked,
whence behold, in the even-sun how marvelous
thy majesty! From thy stately head —
wind-tossed, magnificent
thy stormlocks to the zenith
flow free;

the effulgence sifted through them
thy reclucent countenance shadoweth
as a fulvous aureate veil;
each fold of craggy drapery distinct —
dusk-green and emerald, red-mottled—
about thy middle loose-girded
a mantle to thy firm-planted feet of adamant
down-sweepeth in imperial train;
thy throne despotic — proud brethren
less only than Thou,
for thy haughty pride the proudlier
upbearing thee;

and lo!

Over thy whole glory what azurous bloom is shed . . . fragrantly, as of an intervening cerulean heaven!

Ah, who, who

worshipfully must not avow him thy liege, O thou dream resolutely real, flushed with deity, lordly Mountain sun-crowned!

THE MEANING

II.—A

From far yet, in pioneer decades six days' march hence, or seven, in endless train a-creak the wanes crawling between whirling smoke columns of desert dust-(their garish tunnels of sultry shelter for the wives and the little children; the trail indicated to later emigrants athwart the continent cynically by grotesque wreckage and bleached bones;) Oh, what savage shouts of drunken joy, what murmurs of thanksgiving suffocated by devout emotion, hailed thy first dim looming as a cloudy suspiration at earth's uttermost edge then, soon again thy ghostly uprise as a sapphirine vague pyramid and at length, thy sudden imminence of luminous mass! To trudgers, all but exhausted, hardy homeseeker, rash-spirited adventurer, what visions beatific of sweet peace by honest toil and slow thrift attained, What ungodly hallucinations of fabulous gain squandered in insolent lust!

How wast thou not to them, O Mountain, a prophet's cry, a trumpet-blast of inspiration, a theophany of the very grace covenanted in Accad ages gone to the God-expatriated patriarch of Ur?

II.-B

Ah, to interpret aright thy purpose!

For methinks thy silent welcome
to a people that went by unheedful
of unspoken higher meanings, nowise
was thy final word; else wherefore also
again and again the unwilling eye
fascinate? Beckon insistently, allure,
and the spirit tantalize — ever Thee,
Thee, in manifold moods to contemplate?

Which were, if one might have token sure, thy inmost sense inscrutable and last intention?

> For whatever man doth long envisage, he transfigureth to human semblance; hearkening oracles of his destiny in river and wind and sea.

Therefore, speak, dost thou pierce untoward into the vortex tempestuous of the welkin thus,—
a morbid self-chastiser?
stony head and breast exposing to insensate rage fanatically—the livid lightning at lurid play about thee?

Nay, rather, thou dost uplift thee
a generous-hearted preempter
of ills allotted at large?
the knotted whipthongs of chaos, braving,
that but for thee
would demoniacally leash the earth

Or truth-eager, wouldst thou explore —
with fierce torturing mystery
cloaking thee,
the awful turmoil
but to discern there in the great hush
at midmost fury —
the still majesty of holy law
as Afric Sinai of yore?

II.--C

Ha! Perchance, 'tis some disgust misanthropic caught of a world-ancient grief that biddeth thee thus gruffly shake off our leafy brethren, fain to win thee with fond caresses to a happier mind.

For bare utterly dost thou rise, alone —
and the verdant balsams aromatic,
the silver spruces
ashen-violet or beryl-bluish
thou hast repulsed;
the red-barked
cliff-clamberers also
with their lustrous long spines

with their lustrous long spines
in sunshine iridescent, and their haunting
æolian roar,—
Thou wouldst none of them!

Thou wouldst none of them!

The slender, rigidly erect, sombre-suited sentinels and the wind-twisted knotty cedars, and, with their russet and sanguine

October pomp,—the hardy shrub-oaks

In close fellowships clustered;

Ay, and, emerald-sheeny, the quaking aspens that flicker up a primrose yellow in autumnal ecstasy; and, asprawl, the juniper, pale-berried, close-clinging.

None, none wilt thou tolerate rustling sociably their soul communion?

How otherwise may one interpret thee, strange Scorner — not only of tree-fellowship; — for the innocent flower children, dost thou forbid lest they come nigh thee!

lest they come nigh thee!

Delicately dangling th

Delicately dangling the ruby gilia; the magical willowy wands awave of the goldenrod; the cerulean penstemon in skyey patches; the companies of the columbine white and mauve;

the blazing-stars, staunch and crimson; the tremulously feminine campanulas;—nay, nor the stalwart scarlet-berried kinick-kinick

and all their manifold

bee-murmurous kith and kin —
None wilt thou invite thee, to make merry
up thy precipitous sides;
tho' from base to top thy fellows

make them joyful

year by year with their gay invasion.

Do their foolish hopes, foolish fears to a reasonless ire provoke thee? Their hand-clappings, hand-claspings, infantile laughter and complaint irk thee sore?

irk thee sore?
Wherefore rather
wouldest thou enermine thee
with the snows dumb and deaf,
feel the sharp ice cram thy gorges,
cap thy peak and steel-fend thee
against assailing sympathies heart-anguishful
with what springeth up to perish futile?

At heart a pessimist, O Mount,—
forbidding thyself the insolent self-praise of pity,
if impotent, alas, to foster
and arrest their doom?

Or perchance, 'tis a voracious ardor instinctive, that upheaveth thee for purer air, for light

by a dense atmosphere unsifted;—
the dazzle intolerable of noon,
the quiet
of the starred midnight
unprofaned;
the pallid, opaline
dawns, and the brassy sundowns
extravagant;

the violet afterglows and amethystine moonshine mystical!

Yea, a passion
that possesseth thee to refract the day,
and empurpled, glow-enaureoled
prolong it—

catch the first breaking gleams, and steadily shine and shine to prognosticate the larger glory that shall engulf at last all gloom?

II.-F

Ah, methinks now, utterly,
utterly hast thou abjured, O Mount,
the Titan struggle without reason
against fatal forces all-fashioning,
which with brutal mouths agape
thy scarped foothills proclaim;
their skeleton strata
from their livid-pale green-speckled rent flanks
jutting truculently—as tawny
buff or rufous crags weather-battered
with scabrous cicatrices, and bedabbled
with the purplish black gore stains
of rebellious battle!

Wherefore mute, upbuilded elementally with sheer cliffs, a stupendous pile of loose-tumbled monoliths. above thy fellows art thou exalted thro' resignation; by thy gaze at the Eternal eternalized; an altar whereon for sacrifice nought is spread but heaven's own gift the radiant raiment wherewith in winter it endueth thee for thy service sacramental, O Enthusiast: Yea, nought else at all save thyself hast thou to offer

the all-hallowing divine Blue!

THE MAN

III.—A

Ah, what fancies perverse
doing thee dishonor;
into moods of humanity translating
thy solitude superhuman!

For not surely art thou an unfeeling mass
of willess forces upflung;
a chronicle of chance vicissitudes
for geologist to ponder;
a mindless glyph and symbol luck-sculptured
to minister (thro' priest and prophet)
unto some obsolete edification;
a picturesque blind disarray
to be exploited of dauber and word-monger;—
an inexhaustible dull hoarder
of precious ore for the crazed prospector;
a boastful lurer bither

a boastful lurer hither of sight-seekers from every clime! Ludicrous indignities done thee of small-statured specialists! For who knoweth not what thou art, O Mount?-

Quick energy, for thyself existing, incalculably potential,

together held livingly of the law

that sways suns throughout the universe;

but the law, nowise imposed on thee! Nay, rather of thine own joyful choice adopted and obeyed,

for thou couldest in volcanic orgasm leap forth, a flame to heaven, cumbering the earth with ruin unimaginable; or beyond her atmosphere outfly her reach and stray thro' space forever,

stellar dust.

And, thou holdest thee still self-contained, balanced to the greater Centre in unaffected humility; nay, fast-grappling thee as of desperation,

for very being dependent on loving contact and intercourse essential with the Whole;

of no extraneous power uplifted, nor on pinions idealistic airily oversoaring a despised abyss of peril, thou didst deign not to explore!

By inherent bulk, massy power is thy sublimation compassed,

maintained spiritually through all degrees,

possessed substantially;-

the mastered space

in thy vastitude embodied, thou dost reach up from depths immeasurable continuously to thine own height, with alacrity self-upholden; albeit content

to indicate for others

heights yet higher to attain
if it be their destiny;
albeit refraining thee, from futile strivings
self-withholden,
of thy proper fate enamored,
with the cosmic Order at peace,
and with thy Self.

III.-B

Ah, hast thou an inkling that thou art thus our ideal of the magnanimous god-like Man? Nay, how shouldest thou know at all what thou art-to us men? Ah, how shouldest thou have knowledge in any wise as we, creatures of a day that are in part and are not, poor human glowworms ambitious for firefly freedom; to whom is granted knowledge that in æons maybe and æons in some scion reincarnate more worthy of our democratic ancestry, we may taste - if it be possible on this whirling planet for such as we the bliss of actual being!

the bliss of actual being!

But thou, Mountain, already art,
verily art, hast thy selfhood
achieved, nor needest
inquire what thou art and art not; —
for thee in equipoise, no progress further,
nor retrogression to loathe
with frenzied terror;
ignorant, ah, totally ignorant

of the mean and petty in thy environment: —
the nauseous titillation from the bustle beneath, about
thee,

the parasitical squirm and swarm, the precipitate antlike

in-and-out, to-and-fro of man —
forsooth presuming
to discover thee,
Thee of the million ages!
investing thee with his uneuphonious
cognomen lest thou suffer
continuing nameless; with scrupulous accuracy
noting thee (a scrawly centipede)
on omniscient maps;
charitably advertising thine evact altitude

charitably advertising thine exact altitude
with tinted profiles of thy distinctive features!

Ignorant, blessedly ignorant

of the ingenious cogroad to thy summit as a noose about thy neck to picket thee!

Of the halfbred herds haled at ease above the clouds, of their bovine jests and æsthetic hee-haws

when from thy height for the first time they behold without reverent awe

the sun ascend the heaven;
and with a bored impatience
await critically the program's ending

to assure themselves they have their purchase;—

then turn, relieved and joyous, to the sandwich and the pie!

Ignorant, blessedly ignorant
of the crasser fools who chisel out
records of their pusillanimous personalities . . .

for the unwinking stars

(who could doubt it?) to scan inquisitively;

a rebus for supposititious Marsites, with telescopes askew;

a text hieroglyphic for unborn better races to ponder centuries and centuries!

Ah, blessedly, thrice blessedly ignorant altogether — a victim never therefore

of the horrible vertigo, the heartsick angry scorn of fellowmen —

never slow-sinking in the swallowing quagmire — suspicious of thine own blood, brawn, brain, soul!

Yet, notwithstanding are not We
by the very witness of the sceptic anguish
more than Thou,—
complacent, of doubt incapable?
At least, destined to nobler issue?

Behold if one instant thou deign from thy high trance to stoop thee, how we have journeyed on and on from viscous flow and reflex gush of cellular stuff, to cerebrations that coruscate away the universe!

From protoplasm to vertebrate mammal, man, from amœba to Plato, Cæsar, Napoleon, Goethe!

Ah, who in the slime incipient should have foreknown us?

Who then shall dare prognosticate with calm assurance what fairer, firmer types of Manhood may not come forth from us in ages?

Some higher Being, perchance of transilient imagination, unto ours as ours unto that of wildcat, crested jay, or woodchuck, or of the prolific grasshopper of the plains?

III.-D

Alas, how know we surely

Thou hast not, long ere we began,
grown aweary of the zigzag climb
of Evolution?

And hast learned to prefer static raptures the perpetual reticent self-identity; having left behind the palpitant communion, for utter junction with the universe of thine own election and achievement wrought through denial of separate essence?

For Thee henceforth no former time, no hereafter,

nought to wish, fear, or hope—
a life, without end to anticipate,
of start immemorial,—
All focused in the Eternal subsisting 'Now!'
Oh, Mount of God most holy?
Who for thee—shall make reply?

THE BEECH IN WINTER

I.

How gracious to look upon art thou this sunny winter morn, O Beech. Not now the bleak flaws and sleet-swirls hiss in rude onrùsh their gusty spite at thee, and menace. Nay, not this sweet holy day of windless hush. For, basking in the pale sun, lo, of stark shrub and icicled weed fine-sifted, the dry immaculate snow doth in nook and hollow nestle, and lieth ghost-drifted in quiet stretches wide like rippled sands by the beach of the moonlit sea. And Thou,-unchallenged the while to wrestle with hundred-arm'd demons of air dost still as thy wintery wont, abide in the mystery dreamfast of the ever-recurrent summertide vaguely remembered. Wherefore, at last

to break thy silence no more dare I forbear. Nor surely wilt thou withhold comfort brotherly if in sooth thou be even as I, most gracious Tree,

Twain-souled.

II.

O embodied Allegóry out of the midst of roots which from the depths of gloom have shrunk snakewise to writhe among lilac shoots and clumps of grass rime-hoary,how straight doth thy mist-grey trunk uprise for the skyward soar of thy bole evermore! Yet how homesick too dost thou grieve for touch of the earth iron-frore: the friendlier nether half of thy boughs (whereto white-frosted numberless leaves together ashudder close-cleave) do stoop them in gentle fellowships, yea, and adrowse do droop them, that only their uttermost delicate tips uplift them, as tho' they awoke at the end ashamed so to bend utterly down to the ground,when their brethren, full half of thee, higher strive and aspire, and everywhither forth-feather -(not one sole leap to some single zenith of aspiration supreme) but the rather, with the whole heaven's round about and above to commingle and lose them, they seem; 180

yea, full fain
again to caress it and yet again
with reverent touch of manifold longing and love.

III.

Ha, the Unseen now sways,
O embodied Prayer — soft, soft
sways Thee, and me — ay, Me
the impalpable spirit with thee.

In vain abandoned nests aloft
would recall to our mind
blessèd earth-sufficiencies:
home-love, love of kind
(builders, brooders, fledged nestlings flown;—)
from thy roots to thy topmost sprays
alone!

And methinks 'tis a phantom bird only in memory heard warbleth wailful the plaintive but plain clear song of truth:—

That never shall we attain strive howso we may, and pass alas, wingless as we and uncouth—
(nay, never, tho' gifted we were as the birds of the air with flight for desire) yon sky—you and I—
of pearly murk and aërial pellucid blue!

IV.

Nevertheless pray on,
albeit thou have not thy prayer.
In storm and still pray on, that so
this lonesome wintertide
Thou yet may'st win us, ere we know,

(our fainting faith's Upstayer, our wordy doubt's wordless Gainsayer, and gracious Rebuker of wilful pride) to prayer, to deep-souled prayer; nowise a devotion perverse a false humility, our stature to curse and station; - but aspirant at once, dear Beech, and lowly of heart; remembering the lore the Wisest and Purest teach: -How thy downward yearning indeed doth foretoken the Sun's ardent, ever-new advent for birth in thee, and our kith and kin: How thy upward strain amain hath the passion outspoken which doth with the life begin of all loyal children of earth to display the bond unbroken that knitteth athwart vast space our need to his golden outflow of grace: -Quickener at once and Slayer, who begat our wills as he willed. Wherefore pray on, for praying thou art thy prayer and ours fulfilled.

V.

Then wherefore holdest thou fast
the shrivelled pleasures and passions dead of the vanished
year?
Shake, shake them abroad
scattered to be, and amassed,
in the hither and thither
and futile nowhither
of things — spent and forgotten at last!

If leafage of life thou do crave.

If leafage of life thou do crave, why endeavor the outlived and lifeless to save? Nor the new shall come to thee ever from without!

(When burgeoned thou hast and bloomed wilt thou marvel more, or doubt?) Yea, from within, from within thee, Thee verily, even as dead, (snow-shrouded, ice-tombed) thy glory-to-be must thou win thee! The sun, overhead, with his ambient rays shall warm thy wood, for the sap to mount. The earth beneath thee, thawed, shall nutriment yield from her frost-freed fount of chemic energy. The tenuous atmosphere (thou feelest now as caress, now as buffet of storm) shall serve thee no less. New fibrous strength will it grant thee unto ampler spread, and stouter stand in thy stead here, on thy gravel hill, here where kindly Fate did plant thee. . . . (Thy gravel hill fern-thatched in the spring, and with yellow violets sun-patched, and with mist-flower blue overhazed. . . .) But out from thee shall come, from thy Self, very thee of Thee, unregarded, unworshipped, unpraised and from no remote Elysiùm (for me as for thee,) dear Tree, the life, the might, the thought, the will, the form!

VI.

For still—
O thou most gracious Scion
of the world-old forest
primeval,— the God thou adorest
and dost livingly rely on—
thy God (How often with thee have I knelt
in spirit, O Prayer made visible!)—
thy God,— who else is He but thine own
Nigher Self, inly felt

but unknown: Whom knowing not, heart-simple, thou feignest other than thou, without and afar, hereafter, not now; and in hope and wistful solitude remainest, yearning ever to sun and to star and beyond; - and thy spirit refrainest, in meekness amiss, from thy present absolute bliss!

VII.

Vain our knowledge, Ah, vain; nor aught of life shall we gain therefrom. Nay, let us not darken counsel with foolish speech of a wisdom unvital. Hearken, hearken, only I beseech henceforward thy soul's behest which is best.

And never, (O sanest Lover of the meek and the lowly, Adorer likewise of the high and most holy.) never refrain from thy old grateful reach earthward, nor from thy manifold strain heavenward, (tho' vain it seem - vain) if so be, Thou thereby mayest even as myself attain (the while thou yearnest and prayest) to thine own right stature and duty. the truth of Thee, beyond knowing and seeing, the deathless youth of thy goodliest being and beauty; O thou that art twain-souled for me in hallowed mood to behold

yea, art my Self, from shrouding mystery freed, and understand and heed.

AFTERWORD

Not have these Lines been lying in Metre's Procrustean bed; their rack-extended feet, or truncated limbs adorn'd with barbarous jewels of Rime.

Free be these Lines, and their Rhythm: only the motion—responsive to soul—of sadness or madness or mirth irresistible; yielding the body in confidence absolute unto the God who would speak, through leap and whirl and pose in breathless obedience to Him!



LIFE AND LOVE

A SPIRITUAL BIOGRAPHY IN SONNET SEQUENCES

PART I.—LOVE'S DAWN

I. THE PHILOSOPHY OF LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

AN INTRODUCTORY EPISTLE TO A FRIEND OF YOUTH

I.

LOVE, THE SELF REVELATOR

O Love, soul-healer, heaven-inbringer, hail; not for thy promises of instant good;— for whilst we do not ever the thing we would and live thus virtueless, most false the tale folk feign of thee! Earth-bliss that may not fail? Alas, a manhood, yea and a womanhood hallowed and whole, vain lures and wiles withstood, to prove thee all they praise, alone avail!

Yet hail, if thou but winnow, Love, and sift; if we, thro' harmonies marred the cause discern of disaccord; and Thou (allowing no escape), urge on our indolent will the soul to shape; whereby the sooner pérfected, to learn what the unspeakable sweetness in thy gift!

DIVINE DISCONTENT

For, comest thou, a luller into ease
(false ease of mean content with things not best,)
of our frail hearts no heavenly angel-guest
wert thou, O Love, and thy sworn devotees,
entering thy temple in close companies,
gross worshippers of One, whose base behest
were "Slay the God within! for the brief rest
while biding here upon thy folded knees!"

But being thyself, sweet Love, dear Love, O come; lay hold upon us, make our frailties all mutual slayers,—purgers of the impure, erecters of earth-glories to endure beyond their home,—when we obey the call "Friend, come up higher!" tear-blind for thank, and dumb.

III.

LOVE'S ALTRUISM

Should there have been—(when all we guess is known, and errors fall stripped bare by heartless fact as rose of petals)—no part to enact other than this strange earthlife; and alone it be our human lot to laugh and moan for trifles insufficient won or lacked;— still, Love, thy office were not to compact an altar of such nothings, or a throne!

Self were our Idol not, nor thou his priest!
Still were it well by alternate beck and scourge to give us what should have undying worth; that if at length—'tis only "earth to earth," what is with thee thus buried, prove at least deserving of thy fullest royal dirge!

LOVE THE FRIEND

So, Love, I pray thee, open our sealed eyes; the witchery-snared arouse from dreams o'er-sweet, whence the too late awaking, were to beat bruised breasts in self-revenge; and make thou wise thy dear but foolish questioners, by replies conclusive in austerity; and greet with gentle frankness them who bode deceit lurks in thy rainbow of our sorrow-skies!

For surely, of birth and holy growth—the pains (tho' death be death) are good! Is not the rose, in finished blossom, full reward of rains, payment for sunshine drunken? Ought the close of dissolution to dissuade who grows, from hoarding now of growth his nobler gains?

V.

SUNDERED FRIENDS

Fare forth, old friend of youth's tumultuous years, when every day bred multitudes of deeds in fancy done or cancelled;—ay, as breeds the sea her bubbles, and the rain his tears, woodlands their flowers unnoted, bending ears of bristling grain the field, or snowflake seeds the roadside milkweed. Woe to him who feeds on hopes illusive and unmeaning fears.

Nay, note not now wherein we differ, friend, but what continueth a shared faith; for so shall old times balmily linger in new days—ay, make them hoar with the dear dust of ways trodden together. Fare then forth, but know friends part to meet which ways so e'er they wend.

II. LOVE'S PRELUDE

I.

WOLFENBÜTTEL

The grisly castle on arching pillars built, islanded, with the shallow stream for moat, th' old drawbridge—all did dreamlike overfloat a gulf; and the Child could feel the stone walls tilt, the rock-props bow, the whole labyrinth down-spilt (floors, roofs, halls, corridors) thro' th' awful throat of darkness; and a delicious horror smote who under pillows tucked his monstrous guilt.

Ah, th' sweet protracted shudder athwart the square, against his dazzled eye a crystal prism, the bordering linden miraculously fair with opaline bright outlines; and before his feet, alway ahead, the vague abysm he dared, yet dared not, plunge in to explore!

II.

YOUNG ICARUS

Old folk in a big house among huge trees, tall rosiers guarding stiff the gravelly path, small boats whittled to sail in marble bath, and giant-man (if so his Kingship please) to coax and wheedle, or bullyingly seize for battle-charger and ride with royal wrath in paper-helmet whirling sword of lath;—Ha, and the poodle too—to fondle and tease!

Soon, pockets bulged by gaudy Easter eggs,
wings fast-sewed to his shoulders, homeward flew
along the road proud-hearted Icarus;
whom then befel (as even to all of us)
stung of ditch-nettles face and hands and legs,
bidding in tears his hopes of flight adieu!

AS IN PICTUREBOOKLAND

The barn with cluck of hens and cheep of chicks, cackle of geese, and turkey's gobble-gobble, pigeons' wing-winnowing, and ducks quick wabble; red cows in meadows milked; fly-angered kicks of stabled horses; kittens at darling tricks rollicking in the rubbish; pigs asquabble and squealing; th' old blind watch-hound's hobble; enormous strawstacks, shaggy-eaved hayricks.

All these (not now in the Land of Picturebook, like goblin, ogre, fairy) real and true!

Free, free for climb, run, leap and somersault, and May-bugs mightily from saplings shook; smeared hands and face and clothes—no shame or fault; what joy, to make a town-bred child halloo!

IV.

THE FIRST FUNERAL

Tiptoeing greedily for a plump black cherry, chasing the butterflies from field to field, wasp-hunters crouched behind some shrubby shield with bow and arrow in red-paint savagèry,— ah, well I know those days were long and merry;— tho' best of all the sorrowful hour we kneeled by a dear wee mother robin that revealed her love in death, whom forth we stole to bury!

Over her young she clung when th' wicked crow pecked, pecked away. And not until he slashed her little throat, and tossed her out, had she forsaken them, dying. And, from the apple-tree on guard by the empty nest, the father dashed at every chance bird-comer in fury of woe!

ROADSIDE THEOPHANY

Laid is the road-dust by a summery shower;
on hand and cheek outheld drop splashy jewels
from leafless plane-trees; flights and fierce pursuals,
in panic glee behind their trunks to cower,
or leap out thence the foe to overpower;
rebellions new, and desperate subduals,
reprisals, truces, boisterous renewals
of mimic war; when, look, yon roadside flower!

Spell-bound it held him still and calm and dumb.

Its beauty, ah, its beauty . . . a hyacinth . . . wild . . .
each bell asparkle dewily . . . for him . . .
but not to pull . . . to love! And overcome
of the choking passion, there the untaught child
worshipped with cherubim and seraphim.

VI.

MYSTIC KINSHIP

From the far land where only good folk live mountains reach higher, rivers broader flow, trees huger, and strange fruit and blossoms grow, some day was She to come,—who could forgive (tho' idle and greedy and noisy and talkative) her bad wee boy. But days were many and slow, and he had seen Her—oh, so long ago!

Not love, then; a weird thrill inquisitive.

One day at dawn he 'woke, and with a cry leaped from his cot, and snuggled close and warm, and laughed, and gasped, and sobbed not knowing why. Was it the spirit remembered,—or the flesh,—th' old birth-woe? and thro' Eden walked afresh? and felt one mystic bliss two souls inform?

VII.

TOWARD FIESOLE

Citron and oleander rows; paths part and meet, caper-bloom blotching terrace-walls; twin-pines bless the cool house the noon-glad sun beshines; in the laurel grove a moss'd familiar seat; cicadas shriek without in the dancing heat;— great figtrees sprawl them, and upleaping vines close-chamber, and far, in slow processional lines, gnarled hoary olives haze the glary wheat.

By th' plashy fountain, on his broken plinth,
Pan pipeth jessamine-melodies abroad;
a little white-frocked maiden in her lap
drops baby hands; while lost in the labyrinth
of olden fable, I drop (by sweet mishap)
flowers on her head, with wonder overawed.

VIII.

SAN GIOVANNI

Holy city in the fertile plain outspread,
thine still the secret (tho' forgot long since)
of Her,—estranged and lost to th' fairy prince—
until a dream the little maid was dead
brought fever-nights of sobs to a little bed,
and longings sore to track her faint foot-prints
into the mystery,—gleaning golden hints
of God, as jasmine sprays, to crown her head.

In vain he yearned upon some festal day,
rapt of the chant, astare at candle-shine
about high altars twinkling marvellously;
but, San Giovanni, when the Duomo uprose,
itself one altar lit in the night divine,
the stars with the Child spake — what no man knows.

GROWING APART

Sweet-brier and spruce wax friendly side by side:

'flutterbys' fill him with a jealous ache
that drunken sips of her bloom-wine they take,—
greedy bees tousle her petals and overglide,
and tumble them irreverently, and deride
his rage:—Rogues, wait till a few seasons make
his treeship stout; then will be fir-cones shake
to crush rude wooers of his chosen bride!

Ah, the years—they came; nor soon the silver spruce forgat, for low his branches drooped and yearned to earthward; but the striving sap updrove each season his blue-tipt beauty; and wont and use of sun and storm fashioned him, till he clove the sky, and ignorant roots the sweet-brier spurned!

X.

BOCCA D' ARNO

Dense forests along the river loudly aroar in the wind. On, still we rode; till came the deep hoarse notes of thunder that proclaim the March Mediterranean; and sudden, inpour on white sands—flashing seas, that were before unto the boy a weird and awful name—now a great madness his spirit to untame, a horror of marvel, a glory to adore!

Long, fascinated of the dusk, he ran pursuing still some bark of ghostly sail, ere breathless on the shore he sank alone. When cometh again unto the fullgrown man such word of worship on the blustering gale, such rapturous certainty of the Unknown?

FIRST MANHOOD

The pass attained, in hushed expectance stood, intrepid fellow-farers, he and I—
yea, I—even I at length—who dared defy prejudgment, novice in the brotherhood of men,—that know the evil from the good and freely choose, proud so to do or die!
Foolhardily pinnacled? Ah, not over-high for hero hearts, who will the thing they would!

Hark! a low growl—a roar—the avalanche down-hurtling foamy torrents to the abyss—
Howbeit, we tremble not nor start nor blanch, intoxicated of youth's Alpine air. Hold, hold!—
myriad ice-peaks afire with rose and gold. . .
Ah, God, the terror of beauty and extreme bliss!

XII.

PRIMEVAL MAN

Methought that I surveyed the conquered earth, and felt my breast swelling with pride of kind:— Man, feeblest, slayer with lightning of the mind, lord of all life, and final judge of worth!

Suddenly, the sky, roaring, gives wild birth to shaggy mammoths who the forests grind, huge bears, and wolfpacks fleeter than the hind, that check my vaunting with a monstrous mirth:—

"Thinkest our fear of man—a fear of thee,
poor cowardly liver by thine apish wits?
Our conqueror left earth with us long ago!
Degenerate heir of unearned benefits,
wouldst thou dare front us with his spear and bow?
His eye couldst thou endure so long as we?"

XIII.

PARENTAL JEALOUSY

And it was so—that, when against the wall the King's seat set, and none in David's room among the captains, out of the sullen gloom glowered on Jonathan the fell eyes of Saul:— "Son of perverse rebellion, wherewithal hath Samuel 'witched thee so to choose thy doom,— yea, and mock before all men thy mother's womb? Next to the Bethlehemite? Thy thrall's base thrall?"

The javelin hurled, forth strode in anger and shame Jonathan from the King his father's tent; and, David's heart and hand to strengthen, spent his wonderful love beyond belief of man.

Yet for thy father, amid the world's acclaim, hast thou no pity, O Jonathan, Jonathan?

XIV.

THE SOUL'S EDEN

Strange madness of vainglory, O Greek commander, weeping for other worlds to subjugate! and didst not know, though splendid was thy state, though to thy lusts unbounded realms might pander, proffering thee costlier delicates, godlike grander triumphs than deified despots dream'd; though fate worship thy memory, and vaunt thee "Great,"—numberless empires knew not Alexander?

Each human soul a realm,—nay, world complete,—
joyous or sad, but free! Nor ever can
(save by Love's gracious leave) ambitious feet
tread on its sacred soil; for still the ban
of some strong God bids conquerors retreat:
a flaming sword invisible to man.

FLOWER-TALISMANS

No friends in the monkish many-eyed solitude but kingcup, crowfoot, wild geraniùm, heartsease, and poppy, in the herbariùm mummied devoutly; and tho' their souls elude capture, unto my spirit unsubdued in dreams they come from th' flower Elysiùm as dainty maidens gracious, frolicsòme,—that straightway vanish, ardently pursued.

What snout-tusked behemoth, or crocodile sunning lank jaws in the foul ooze of Nile, could sense the approach of translunary things; and creatures immaterial, uncreate,— witcheries sweet, vague marvels, hallowings boyishly shy, zephyrously delicate?

XVI.

ALTENBAUMBURG

THE LILIES

Of Altenbaumburg the grim tale is told,—
How the lord thereof of old to Holy Land
fared, cross on bosom. And a lewd kinsman planned
the lady's ruin. When to all wooings cold,—
of smiles he taxed her for a page high-souled.
And long the subtly kindled flame he fanned,
ere the earl, sped home, by torturing doubt unmanned,
and frenzied smote, and laid the twain in mould.

Lo, on the morrow above the outcast grave twin lilies shone; but th' ruthless sword, which slew lady and youth, their upright purity clave.

In vain. For, with the dawn they uprose anew and bloomed God's witness she was leal and true.

Then thro' his heart fierce grief the death-thrust drave!

XVII.

ALTENBAUMBURG

THE COMFORTER

Alas, and couldest thou thus smite and slay whom thou didst swear for better and for worse to cherish—a woman? Poor passionate heart perverse, of wicked calumny the piteous prey, what durst thou in the awful judgment say—a judge thyself, unjust? No rays disperse of moon or star the midnight of thy curse—a living gloom in God's undying day.

But hark, another legend: For seven-score blind palsied years he lived,—shunned, feared, unknown, deemed mad, for that at morn and eve he kneeled by those twin lilies to wring his hands and groan... Till—God's own mother came and blessed and healed, and he had rest, and the lilies bloomed no more.

XVIII.

FORETASTE AND AFTERTASTE

Prepotent wizardry of bygone joys!

often have I beheld thy faraway smile
and marvelled what thy vision—over stile
athwart field, beyond stream;—what thing might poise,
Mother, midair,—invisible to a boy's
penetrant sight,—that so could thee beguile,
grief-haunted, thee? Tho' sweeter than erstwhile,—
in memory sipped, no golden honey cloys?

Ah, thou didst awe inquiry. Unprofaned the hallowed mysteries, my head I bowed reverent, and lonely with thy loneliness.

Yet, neither could I to thee my hopes confess, my boyish faiths,—adventures unavowed to goals of fortune, never since attained!

XIX.

MÜNSTER AM STEIN

Two castled crags buttress the mount; their feet washed by the silver of the shallow river; shrubs, briers and grasses whisper, waver and quiver, in wanton airs with linden subtly sweet; but th' brine-pumps shudder, sob and low entreat, like spirits in torment. Ah, who may deliver souls from self-loathing? Life-giver and forgiver, why now and ever thy best boons incomplete?

I leaned me over th' parapet of the bridge,
when sudden anear some strange soft voice spake slowly:—
"Thither thou goest, and so"—"Not I—Lord, Lord."
"Yea, child, for that thou hast thyself abhorred."
Deep-sighing I gazed from moon-hazed ridge to ridge,
from star to star—and th' long lone night was holy.

XX.

PROPHET OR POET?

Through the purple portal of that heart of thine where sets the sun of self in sumptuous state, pass on, with earth's full beauty insatiate, to where no range of mountainous hopes confine thy vision clear; thou, who dost life resign, its whole cloud-sky of follies dissipate, pierce on—the inmost Splendor contemplate,—float rapturously on fluctuant deeps divine!

But, oh, return not thence, thou man of God, leave not thy bliss to teach us; naught avails. We yet will tread the ways our fathers trod.

Above earth's dusk-veiled peaks of purity, dumb, stand beckoning! If thy starry summons fails, will cries and tears and pleadings make us come?

XXI.

A HADLEY HOLIDAY

Limpid blue sky-pools shifting argent edges
'twixt toppling billowy heaps of lucent cloud;
hyaline shower and beryl sun-bow. Unploughed
fallow and wheat-field green; green wayside hedges;
meads, golden-dotted, green to the lush, quick sedges;
diaphanous willows verdantly wind-bowed
by slipping emerald streams, that croon half-loud
where the ivied steeple's spire—light-etched—upwedges.

Bright, pure, sweet, tender,—England's blessèd June: green dart of dragon-fly, flash of kingfishèr; eglantine, honeysuckle sheeny-fresh;
Shakespeare's and Shelley's runes to importune coy visitants that may not long demur when flesh is spirit, and the spirit flesh!

XXII.

A FEVER HALLUCINATION

In a dream-forest, o'er the moist leafmold above her green-fret aureole, (while drip-dripped the night-rain 'round) golden-eyed, rosy-tipped, the pale anemone shivered unconsoled of day, for one tear's burthen. A woe foretold vaguely, but irremediable, my heartstrings gripped. I kneeled me down, and her pure sorrow sipped for pity. Who might well such grace withhold?

In vain. Her petals, translucent for the wet, fell moth-still on her leaves, flitting to ground ghostwise; when on my shoulder—a soft touch! Our eyes, serenely in recognition met:—
"In this vain charity the spell is found we sought, my son. Ah, who can love too much?"

XXIII.

THE PEAK OF VISION

"Come," whispered he, "climb at the least the nether of thy twin peaks of vision." I clomb with him grief-heavy, whenso my hand he loosed; to skim (snapping asunder earth's tense spirit-tether) on swallow-pinions over stone and heather ahold of one another. And soon, vast, dim the plains outspread; and my eyes for joy o'erbrim on the upper height—in hallowing hush together.

"Son, hereto fain was I to climb in life.

Wherefore, 'tis given me hither in death to soar with thee. Nay, deem this no delusive dream!

Ever my spirit was let of futile strife in yonder flats. So shalt not thou blaspheme

Love that is all in all forevermore."

XXIV.

CONVALESCENCE

Who eye to eye hath gazed in th' face of death—
for him old Earth her primal splendor wears;
o'er dew-sprent meadows blithesome forth he fares,
his heart with the lambkin gamboling; his breath
difficult for the cloud that shadoweth
the hoarthorn-wooded hillside unawares,
till th' sun, forth-burst,—youth's vagrant vague despairs
vanish, as th' ghostly shadow vanisheth.

O glens of sheer moist crags, O thunder falls foam-wild and windy, fern-fronds madly adance; querulous bleatings in green uplands lone; twittery loops of flight and plaintive calls of hill-larks; O vast river-thrid expanse;— how shall he ever your spell and sway disown?

XXV.

AGAIN THE TROJAN BOY

"Blinkbonny" yonder a-perk on "Sunny-brae"—
at th' top of the narrow crookèd cobbly street
whose braw wee homes upscramble, snug and sweet
with pots and shrubs in happy disarray;
laburnum, syringa, wall-flower yet waylay
my spirit, and compulsively entreat
three pure glad lassies' smiles again to meet—
each proffering her fresh-pulled strawberry.

Her of the auburn glory? Her of the raven?—
Eyes sapphirine? Eyes jetty? Gay, true, kind?—
or passionate, haughty, tense, imaginative?
Not theirs the name in th' shrine of youth engraven.
Nay, pensive, tender, of loveliness undefined,
Hers rather whose wistful grey-green eyes forgive.

XXVI.

FIRST DISILLUSION

Along life's sun-bright highway in lustihead boldly the lad strode forward mile on mile, deriding lures of bypath, shady stile, green-ripply pool, walled orchard, garth or stead; for a farewell word to say,—and left unsaid.

What drunken cries the evening hush defile?

A rout of reapers, women and men, lewd, vile, goatlike leap past with Corybantic tread.

And in the town, starved, brutish, foul, obscene, night's outcast tide forth-gorgeth to the wharfs:—wizen children, blear-eyed mothers, dotard dwarfs, harlots, bloat reeling brawlers....God, this, this the world—thy stars from heaven behold serene?

And angels hail Thee—holy in ignorant bliss?

XXVII.

MATERIALISM

A vision came to me that asked no leave:—
With daybreak, over meadowland dewstrewn;
by streambank, or cool forest-edge, at noon,
with day's fire-passion pulsating; at eve
when glowed the west day's rapture to receive,
thro' the ripe fields, and under the gold moon
no Man! Iron monsters noiseless late and soon
stalk back and forth, and the sad harvest sheave!

Then to vast cities of men's building fled
my spirit. Lo! through close streets traffic-worn,
o'er squares, whose splendor splashing founts applaud,
no living Men,—but everywhere the Dead!
Not spectres even of creatures womanborn,—
but automatic tombs that swarm abroad!

XXVIII.

THE SAVING FAITH

Stern prophets of the law, and hermit-saints, shall cruel mummeries chasten and atone?
By loud-mouthed creed, by coward wail and moan, Man, hallowed? or by torturing constraints?
Woe's me, beholding you, my soul's hope faints—wilts as a morning-glory overblown.
What? Yours—the heavenward way of old foreshown?
And Christ's—on all things lovely, your attaints?

Yet, tho' anhungered, shall no honeyed morsel the birthright buy of a holy sweet young love. Not Venus, thou avaunt, white Witch of Horsel! In hair and bosom methinks coiled serpents hiss th' doors wherethrough thy temple votaries shove op'n lurid, on a sudden black abyss.

XXIX.

NEAR AND FAR

Medreamed a traveller toil'd the long land thro':

His path rock-hemm'd, now under trees yet bare,
o'er sun-dried sands, or treacherous stretches where
stored rains thro' dead weeds blinked; and no wind blew
to give aught life. Sore did the traveller rue
that forth he adventured on vain quests to fare,
all things unseen of the vacant sullen stare,
till the spirit a chance look backward smote and slew.

"Barren hills of birth,—and arid tracts o'er-past,—
most wonderful for beauty? Ah, nowise so!
Well do I mind me of all your hideousness;—
even as this ground! Now, verily now I know
those hills of beckoning repose at last,
be as this present, bleak—nor more, nor less!"

XXX.

FAR AND NEAR

Medreamed a wayfarer in th' drear waste lay incredulous of all good but death. "Believe," I longed to cry, "thou dost thy soul deceive;" but dumb lips vainly to hearten him essay.

Then sudden, as for strength to help I pray— an angel doth his home of comfort leave, alighteth nigh, and whispereth: "Wherefore grieve, Brother? Arise, and onward toil—today."

"Yea, and tomorrow?"—"Toil."—"And after?"—"On!
Canst thou not see how magically fair
bloometh the trodden waste? And such it is.
The ground thou treadest hath invisible share
of heavenly beauty. As shines the sun who shone,
so th' hills of birth and ultimate rest—are His!"

XXXI.

LUMINOUS HOURS

Time hath no substance save what borrowed is of the soul's vital being. Moments dart, huge suns, leagues inconceivable apart, self-hung in the void abysm of centuries, framing the real light sphere—immensities of nothing, merely marble with black art. And the true seers record on their sky-chart only the suns in stellar symmetries.

What madness then to clamor for length of years whose lapse were adding naught to naught in vain? Ask rather, that every allotted minute burn with all its possible luster: splendid pain or radiant joy. So shalt thou verily earn Eternities secure from cynic jeers!

XXXII.

THE LIVEOAKS IN MARCH

Brave battlers with the phrenzied winds of fate, who stand, though shaken, firm-footed on cliff-ledge, stream-border, swamp-marge, turning the fierce edge of vehement currents, lifting the vast weight of their mad falls on tortuous branches, great and legioned leaves;—O Trees in March, full pledge that our wills, resolute, can sternly wedge blasts of adversity, and storms of hate:

Impart your spirit, that every muscle grow gnarled, knotted, self-controlled, wherewith to thrust redoubled onslaughts back with stubborn might; no rage, rush, rancor, chase of worsted foe—

Ye, who war not because ye choose but must, your roots fast riveted in their native Right!

XXXIII.

UNEARNED RETURNS

Nay, jealous souls, ye dare imagine naught can wax fair and complete, unshapen of pain knowingly borne and bitter? Ye entertain (hard hearts!) no sacred hope that (though we wrought through years of sullen misery, ere we caught one clew to the dire labyrinth,) in th' plain some Child may gaily weave a daisy-chain to snare unwittingly the wisdom sought?

Comfort it were to deem our grief unshared; our paths untrodden of many a soul, too pure for cleansing sore, who gently in by-paths fared; too heart-whole for hell-remedies that cure with pangs lonelily awful; too bright-haired to need the halo, martyr-pains ensure!

XXXIV.

THE PARABLE OF THE DEW

In th' city square of grass an hour we spent.

What dared with obstinate glad eyes pursue
the heart, to search its moody deep? The dew.
But angry answer got it as we went:—

"Why Primacy? Why ever preeminent
(tyrants, or delegates elect) the few,—
when equal myriads might swing green, red, blue,
or gold in your breeze-rippled firmament?"

"True, and 'tis ye misdeem us, angle-bound.

Alike doth dance, in th' selfsame sun ablaze, our emulous beauty, tho' only the sky's round (all angles compassing) can all behold."

In vain their parable the dewdrops told: still angle-bound, we award our blame and praise.

XXXV.

THE JUDGMENT

Not as a terror of sudden thunderclap cometh the judgment? Nay—as sunny air, distinguishing, in season, foul from fair; causing to rise from sleep-stark roots the sap, and swelling buds to burst; so, where ill hap the dreamer slew, it leaveth him to scare with skeleton boughs a-writhe at fruitless pray'r,—in the grove's fellowship—a ghastly gap!

Ah, were it not ignoble of God's spring to mock the lost? As in Bahama fields close-bloom the lilies, unhaunted by a thought of perished bulbs, all beautifully up-wrought by sun and shower the blessed season yields—God's saints alone shall stand up—blossoming!

XXXVI.

EVIDENCE OF SANITY

Crazed? Crazed! poor cringing dotard hobbling by, stayed on thy staff—thy back with life's load bent. Thy toothless greeting—Ha, what hath it meant—benign light gleaming in thy colorless eye? For, faring under summer's serene sky when blossoms cheer with warm voluminous scent the very blind; or, when clouds pitch their tent o'er a dull world,—he greeteth all. Mad? Why?

Strangely it smote me then, what the sole proof thereof;—that in all weather foul or fair ever he smiled alike in every face.

Ha! Have we come to this,—that equal grace to all, at all times, in God's open air, proves maimed the mind, from man and God aloof?

XXXVII.

NOT YET

One night I woke, for at my soul's door, hark, a gentle rap, heard surely once before, though when, I wist not. Quick, unbar the door? Nay, ask thou first who ventureth thro' dark and wind and rain! Straightway I knew. No spark on my hearth glimmered, no fitting robe I wore. "Not now, Lord, dare I open. Knock no more. Too vile this hovel for thee its soil to mark."

Then sudden, a deafening clangor, and the walls of my poor house shot high—a glory seat— a holy fane, where robed as priest I stood, and crowned as King. Now welcome Him I would. But the sole answer to despairing calls— a slow dread shuffle of faint withdrawing feet.

XXXVIII.

PRESENCE

Nay, Thou art ever with us till the end.

In massy gloom like ultimate bounds of space stern arches close us in. And face with face of friend and stranger indistinctly blend to a still radiance. The white candles spend their virgin strength, uprearing, each in place, spheres quivering of golden glow; and holy pace keeping, the anthem's soft notes heavenward wend.

Then tears spring, and breath fails. In dumb amaze the heart asks: "Who art Thou, that comest so all-hallowed, in the loss of everything?

Who art Thou, speak—whom the blind feelings know?

Behold the beautiful grace of the Great King, who walketh o'er the hushed seas of our praise!

XXXVIII.

NO CROSS, NO CROWN

True, there be lessons hard for us to learn, which we may understand, and do believe, yet cannot take to heart. Still must we grieve that we are cramped and meagre; still must burn for freer, higher things; but ne'er discern when we be nearer; for to self we cleave, and, sanguine, ever again our heart deceive: without distress some worthy bliss to earn!

And, nowise ever on pleasure's paths we meet
Love's angels soothing, sweetening, comforting.
To feel blithe spring is worth the snow and sleet;
'tis worth long rains to hear the song-birds sing;
life's bitter, if more we relish so its sweet;
the martyr's death, when close to love we cling.

XXXIX.

AUTUMN SADNESS

Sad deemest thou the glorious death of day, when the last beams, caught by horizon-mist, flare out in crimson, rose, gold, amethyst the prismal secrets of the living ray?

And sad the carnival of colors gay wherewith, at the year's set, the leaves insist they too are of the sunny Colorist light-hearted children tho' the frost gainsay?

Sad is the vast laugh of the wind-clear'd sky,
the waste of shine on symmetries reveal'd
in the stripp'd boughs? Blasphemer, why proclaim
with thine own mouth thy spirit's piteous shame?
For still the brave, and the proud who dare not yield,
forefeel the bliss of dying—ere they die!

TRUE YOUTH

Dear glorious world, thou art forever still
worthy the song of poets, and all men
would be thy worshippers, but each his den
inhabiteth of baser things; his eager fill
preferring for animal appetites, that kill
the soul of worship; free one moment, and then,
the next, by self-blown whirlwinds sucked again
into the vortex of the slavish will!

O never to forfeit boyhood's fresh delight in sunshine on gold waters, in long hills of leafless woodland hoar with winter's breath; breathless forever with the wind's swift flight, gladdened by the loud leap of flashing rills, till prospects new burst on the soul with death!

XLI.

SWEET MAID INCONSTANCY

The sparrows in a flutter whirl and quarrel; the maple-buds have burst in crimson sprays; wild peach and cherry in snowy and rosy haze abloom; the dogwood glows; the mountain laurel flings up budclusters waxen, of delicate coral; Spring, Spring at last, the blessèd prayed-for days of reasonless delight and still amaze,— and myth new-fabled without end or moral!

Ha! thro' her garth oread or dryad goeth
beautiful, chaste,—and smileth to thy smile.
Hold! Dost thou see not the moss'd precipice?
How can she love one lover—thee—that knoweth
ages,—and ever new wooers to win and wile
with th' elusive azure-eyed lure of her pure kiss?

XLII.

INNOCENCE HUMAN

"Beautiful, mother? What is beauty?"—"Ask, Child, the anemone!"—"She shivereth in the spring-wind!"—"Hark what the azalea saith unto the honey-bees at their sweet task; watch the yellow wheat-seas roll, the leafage bask crimson and gold and purple, and at a breath fall fluttering earthward"...."Nay, is beauty death to whoso dareth bid her brow unmask?"

The rock-edge snowily shag-fleeced, icicle-maned; oak, beech, brier, aster, goldenrod frost-hoary, transfigured to iridescent crystal glory unsufferable;—these also, the sun slew.

But God Apollo—Her to his breast constrained. then, blind for rapture of love, She blushed and knew!

XLIII.

INNOCENCE DIVINE

In red-rose bower, green-shadowed from the shine of sky and sea, lay Psyche in dream aloof.

To twitter of bird-wooings, the leaf-roof fluttering sun-blessèd, Eros, in the bloom-twine (for Aphrodite's envy) of aim malign, stood, dire;—but, tangled straightway in passion's woof, he wooed her nightly, praying, for love's behoof, in hallowed dark to trust his troth divine.

Soon subtle whispers wrought. Harm-boding, lo! his godhood thro' diaphanous veil espied,— smit-blind, heart-heavy He vanished; She, for woe wasted, 'till Zeus (her dying prayer denied) gave Eros sight, and Her immortal glow,— and, seeing as God, Love smiled for holy pride.

XLIV.

FIRST SIGHT

"Make known the trysting day decreed of old.

What sign—to mark her when she passeth by?

Lovelier,—shall she woo the sensual eye
enriched with honor, of all the world extolled?

Or,—shall she, close in mystery enfold
her beauty for whoso draweth softly nigh
God-guided to her shrine? What loss if I
shall lose her, overtimid or overbold?"

Thro' the unbroken snow, on, on he pushes obeying invisible sunny beckonings; around him fluffy-ruffed, in ermine hoods shine oaks ice-jewelled, and holly and hazel bushes. Ah, met he no one in the winter-woods? What low sweet laugh in memory birdlike sings?

XLV.

HEART'S PERVERSITY

Beholding beauty, men and Gods adore;
yet, as the closed lid dims the azure day,
so might a resolute scrutiny display
to keen leal eyes—what should no pity implore,
but ravish contemplation more and more.
From who hath not, ignobly take away?
Th' self-plight word: 'let there be love' unsay—
for that to grant full largess, fate forbore?

—"Thou—scorn to worship who doth praise command by absolute occult prerogative? Thou,—wield Life's sceptre in fool-hardy hand, at thy fond dooming, grace withhold or give who nowise mayest Love's wisdom understand, nor his prenatal fiat defy, and live?"

III. A VISION OF THE PASSING OF EROS AND APPRODITE

XLVI.

LOVE'S SORROW-TRANCE

Heart-lost lay Love on the wave-beaten beach.

Eyeing him sweetly, lucent-robed, a maid
at either hand leaned o'er her harp and played:
one instrument ebon, strung with moonbeams, each
captured distinctly; th' other in bending reach
by th' fairer harpist,—ivory, overlaid
with rose-flush faint for nearness chilly-afraid
to brow and bosom, of sunny musical speech.

Bare gleaming arms exquisite in blithe curves, and firm of grace, bloom into hands that sweep zephyrously soft the vibrating tense chords.

Lo, either harpist with ardent eyes observes (but for their greed of seeing, fain to weep) her own best-loved heart's lord-elect-of-lords!

XLVII.

LOVE'S AWAKENING

"O Yearning, true, what aileth, speak, thy Lord?
O Joy, voluptuous-lipped, and wont to fling some bird-like snatch of witchery a-wing to warble about thee; what dire spell abhorr'd unkings his spirit, whom ye vowed to ward from influence unholy? Let upspring tumultuous strains his spirit to re-king—tho' his flower-sceptre change to barbarous sword!"

Ah, Yearning, noble-browed, thy dark eyes fill with tears? And, Joy, thou sobbest too?
Ye dread the wrath of madness to provoke?
Better he slay you in fury self-will,—
or behold him piteously his death-dream woo?"
Whereat, as from a trance,—their Lord awoke.

XLVIII.

LOVE'S SOOTHSAY OF DOOM

"In vain...too late! My throne crumbleth to dust.

A blast fanatic from charr'd wilderness
shall wrap th' whole earth in fire. Nevertheless—
reptile and vermin overlive; yea, lust
unnatural, cringing greed, and gross mistrust
wear priestly vesture; and craven man doth bless
all blasphemy of life, and lewd excess
of fury against things lovely and august!

"Oh, Aphrodite, holy Mother of bliss, rise in thy billowy fierceness, and with death of raging sorrow-seas wash clean the earth, and sweep all gods and men into the abyss of utter naught, ere they call vileness worth, and darkness light! for lo, Love perisheth!"

XLIX.

THE TIDAL WAVE

As 'twixt twin luminous cliffs (their harps) inrolled majestically tempestuous, up the strait, the full sea of a harmony passionate.

And the frothy tidewave heaved, swelled, gathered hold upon the vast deep of the stillness cold; waxen each moment, with frantic might elate, until up-heaped—one mountainous height of fate to quench the sun 'mid clouds, a blaze of gold.

Suddenly crested 'twas with Aphrodite effulgent, spread voluptuously bare.

Her eyes flashed drowsy bliss into the soul, her arms, spray-beaded, reached in sweet entreaty.

And the wave brake in welter of despair, then back to the sobbing bosom of silence stole.

CASTING THE HOROSCOPE

What? Love, and his fair harpist-maidens drown'd, by the awful onset of mysterious might, foam-crested with the Mother-of-delight— (upheaval from harmonious deeps profound—waters under the earth, man dare not sound,) that swirled, and swallowed all in vast affright? Nay, a mere fever-vision of the night,—no mystic sense for Wisdom to expound?

Yearning and Joy—Lord Love—and Beauty too gone? And the nightmare-terror,—the desert-blast,—hath blown forth over the charr'd earth his fire? The age of reptile and vermin overpast, whence cometh, speak,—seer, poet, deity,—Who life with th' old breath of God to reinspire?

PART II.—LOVE'S SUNRISE

THE WOOING O' IT

A SONNET SEQUENCE

I.

SPEECHLESS PROPOSAL

No word of mine won thee, too well I know!—
Long silent at the sheer rock's edge we stood.
Where, in a world so beautiful, so good,
might any evil lurk? Their wilful "no"
on your lips hovered, but for the whisper low,
as to yourself:—"If love were love, how should....
old earth be heaven!" At th' blush for all love could,
low laugh'd the wind his blessèd mirth to show!

Waves of the sea, asparkle in the sun,
wild waves of leafage! Breeze-blown clear song-spray,
that gemm'd the soul! What scent-whiffs searching sweet
breath'd from sunk blossom-reefs, when—half in fun,
half earnest,—the rose I gave, you tossed away...
which the wind-driv'n song-sea wash'd back to your feet!

LOVE'S HUMILITY

Hush, list, the audible waver of tender leaves, the flutter of blossoms in the air's green-gold—past which the throstle darts; and how the bold shining array of spears, that fend from thieves dew-treasures atwinkle in the grass-bed, heaves with anger at his advent! Sweets untold lure eye and heart; even the open harrowed mould, purple-brown shadowed, gladdeneth whoso grieves.

Thro' acacia bloom snowing from green cloud-drifts 'twixt rose-blue lilac hedges, passeth by,—
purer than the glistering core of a dew-bead in th' lily's sheen-white chalice lifted high from soilure golden,—One whose innocent gifts desire miraculously and prayer exceed.

III.

PARADISE GAINED

"O Dearest, was it thou that wentest so in Eden unguarded, and in maiden-wise caressed each bud that kissed thee, with dream-eyes so serious-gay, from under brows aglow with the candor over them? Alas! Pray, go, go with thy smile, Love,—leave me, tho' there dies a soul in me for every step . . . despise thy adorer!—With sister lilies stand arow.

"For who could thy free look of trust endure,
thou queen of me? Go, with my soul's one love.
Awe seizeth me. Thee I wooed? O pride and pain!
in cloud of heaven withdraw thee! I here abjure
earth's claim to thee!" Hark!—thrush-song from above
cleft my dream sky! Nay, Full-of-Grace, remain!

PARADISE LOST

I got me an hour—my own—of the hoarded sum
Time doles out loth to his grave-delvers for pay.
I scanned my occult coin, dream-borne straightway
amidst the thrill with thee, the glimmer and hum
of bygone springtides: boughs, adventuresome,
flung warbled challenges from spray to spray,
piercing-sweet wind-whiffs censed the holiday
of squirrels and violets for th' Winter of Death o'ercome.

Paths, ferny, at random meandered and crisscrossed.

A loose-blown bloom-dance free in blithe mid-air!

When for sheer frolic wantonness: "Where," I cried,

"Hide th' old fall'n leaves—hopes crimson and gold—
that died?"

Looking reproach you faded. Ah, where, where?— My innocent Eden of an hour was lost.

٧.

SUDDEN SPRING.

What myriad spears of grass and sabres sheen weighed down with orient dew-gems glistering!
In lairs of leafage savage-fanged between—
see, the tawny dandelion crouch to spring!

Ten-thousand hands for the breeze with amorous zeal to fondle and kiss float daintily unwithheld! Bride-veils of buds strive, blushing, to conceal ambushed blue twilights of the sun expelled.

Shoots, like some delicate child, for pity ask.
Foolhardy clumps forgat their foliage shield, and, blossom-helmeted, in the hot sun bask,—
swoon, and voluptuously their honey yield.

So sudden and sweet, and various and strange came Spring, came love—God's wonder-work of Change!

ORCHARD OPTIMISM

O fragrant fleeciness of orchard snows!

My lavish apple-trees, your honeymoon is at the full. The brisk air gleams and glows, at this good hour of the sun-happy noon.

Freighted with myriad nectar-laden craft of shiny sail, whose ports were your rich bloom, their cargoes stolen the while the petals laughed at jests and compliments of buzz and boom.

What all this beauty and glory for, dear trees?
This gorgeous unthrift? Have I understood?
O tell no lover, for his keen eye sees
e'en your sound hearts right thro' your ancient wood:

Ye live, ye love, and in your gladness give your best to all—if they but love and live!

VII.

LOVE'S COMPASS.

Were I ten thousand miles from one dear face,
I were not far, meseems! For, if I sought
at night the depths of starry heavens, and caught
the rays that journeyed centuries through space
to reach me, leaving in the gloom no trace
of their swift flight;—it were a happy thought
how earth, our giant orb, had shrunk to naught,
a mote, unrecked-of in a luminous race—

half-star, half-starlit—circling round its sun
of molten gold; a bower of fragrant bloom
leaving its orbit sweet; with seas empearled,
lost for its littleness,—though dear to One
whose silver censer 'tis;—lo, We, for whom
He made it, kiss in our sweet, insignificant world!

VIII.

BODY'S ABSENCE

I may be near thee only when mine eyes can sound the depth of thine? When to a word, spoken in rapturous worship, come, scarce heard, from close warm-breathing mouth thy dear replies? Must yet the while life's chance wills otherwise, and hand can hold not hand, bliss die deferred till sense discern what ne'er the heart so erred as to mistake for thee—mere soul-disguise?

Day-dreaming, faces strange draw nigh; but thou retirest vague, of whom alone I dare no wilful image frame. O then forgive if knowing thee unspeakably too fair for a more intimate revelation now,

Love in thy body's presence needs must live.

IX.

FANCY OR FACT

Ay, musing, faces strange crowd close and peer deep in my eyes; till, if I question them they fade in dusk, but soon, again, draw near: why to their sight will you my soul condemn?

For you retire in some dim fastness far, impregnable to fancy's boldest host; and when I think of all you truly are, no vision comes—only a shadowy ghost.

O then, my Love, indeed you must forgive if love refuse your bodily sight to miss, sound of your voice, caress of hand, and live in fullest gladness only when we kiss!

Worship the work of Phidias for divine ye eyes who never saw the God, as mine!

INDIVIDUAL INSUFFICIENCY

In fever of new-born thought I strode forth strong to conquer all, for the shackles of brute fact and rusted custom broke. Set free, I lacked naught the soul craves, and drew deep breath and long till—flesh, dissolved,—the hideousness and wrong we know thro' it, undone,—the whole compact mass of hostilities to man annulled,—my act my thought seemed all there was of th' stellar throng.

"Alone! Alone!" That pitiful cry drave back my spirit to the body's dungeon-keep, foiled, miserable, aching, limited, far from all things desired, in void and black; gyved with traditional chains to work and weep! What were it to be God, alone—and dead?

XI.

MUTUAL SUFFICIENCY

Love, mutually confirmed in hope and trust, our spirit's flood—if of the world denied—with jubilant swell topples its towers of pride, and drowns in pure green deeps its fires of lust. Yet, affable, (should it allow that dust is naught, love all), see, swiftly home we glide to our twain visible selves,—as ebbs the tide sun-sparkling, to its antique limits just!

From non-existence back, with tolerant nod, welcome the world! Through torrid rows of wheat we stroll, and rest by streams, or breathe the air intoxicant on dizzy peaks;—glad of this sweet short day of limitation which we share, till mounts the dawn of some new Morn from God.

XII.

PERSPECTIVES

Life's sea of waves foam-helmeted, rank on rank in truceless bitter strife with fierce hoarse roar break angrily against the rock-mailed shore, whereon, since the sun's orb of red fire sank, hangs hopeless gloom, some stars in mockery prank; and ghastly sobs half-heard, are heard no more—cries suffocated, as from who foreswore existence, leaving hold of a floating plank!

Life seemed not such to us: lucid, serene,—
a sun-warmed lake, the fragrant land-airs skim
as swallows, whereover flies love's happy boat,
(merry wishes the oars thereof) to some dear dim
outlet of wood-edged creek from the world remote,
where kiss two lovers as—seeing the Unseen.

XIII.

WILD-GOOSE CREEK

Yea, so it was. Lost utterly to view
between twain walls of glistening reeds we stole,
following the creek's sly windings, O my Soul,
under low-arching boughs; and each well knew
the other's thoughts unspoken: I and you
silently merging to a nobler whole!
birds warble our bridal, forget-me-nots unroll
legends, on either marge, of heavenly blue!

Our vows none heard save waterlilies white,—
stars, once of old down-slidden to feel the cool
of stream and rest of fragrant obscure days.
They long foreswore the heaven's vain rivalries.
Ay, who would change, dear Stars, for heaven's high rule
first love's shy irresponsible delight?

XIV.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

Nowise yon flower at th' river's edge conceives the River's course and nature; nor explains his will to give, by compensating gains imaginary: unexplained she leaves his sparkling vesture (sun, or full-moon weaves), his unintermitted laugh in summer rains; thirst all she knows; and the quelling of its pains by th' unknown Lover, whom loving, she believes!

Why may not also we, of Love unknown, divine the glory by our human share?

As when her soul yon flower sheds on the air, feels in her bliss the bliss of the great River, knows in herself, the indiscriminate Giver, her petals to a dance of rapture blown?

XV.

TRUE LOVE

Oh, Love, how false we be, shallow and slight, how rash of vow, and craven of daily deed! Pride, vanity, ambition, profane greed our gloom with alien glamour to unite, assume thy Godhood's guise. Hydras whose bite maddeneth, (whose self-propagative seed must perish not ever wholly in man) rear, freed at thy feigned fiat, and the soul affright.

How kennel again life's fierce hell-hounds of lust, unleashed in youth's foolhardy over-trust?

Fire-sword in hand, the roused Will can but slay. Grief, bosom-sister of Love, such power hast thou to exórcise, hallow, and heal? Lead, lead even now back to the inviolate shrine thy footsore way!

XVI.

SELF-SURRENDER

Myself, Love, have I given without reserve?
Who can grant more than all he hath? If poor, poor be the donor's gift. Why therefore swerve from the path of faith to love's acceptance sure?

All that was mine I gave thee, and more—my will, for thy sake laying to man's whole birthright claim; vowing adjustments fiercely versatile to shifts of chance, defying fame and shame.

Ah, who hath self then in so certain hold to make surrender instant and entire?

Let me but challenge self to fight high-souled—

Love's champion true,—to conquer or expire:

And, without blast of horn or shrill of fife, thine the still glory of the life-long strife.

XVII.

UNSHARED FEARS

Lone night of life! Long gloom that sundereth—
when shall it pass? Wake up, Love, do not sleep.
Grim half-seen horrors thro' the blackness creep,
and grisly sounds rush by with th' chill of death.
We are not twain, with One beside? Our breath
is drawn from a vast spirit-haunted deep?
We are not ever alone in Love's safe keep?
Watch with me, thou whom heaven's truth halloweth!

Crazed am I? Ha! Thou seest, hearest nought?

Needs must I wait till light stream thro' the skies
for comfort?—friendless now for sleep's dear sake?

What? Never may our souls be nearer brought?

Starve must we for love's smile, by each personal ache sundered, until superfluous at sunrise?

XVIII.

LOVE'S IMMORTALITY

"Ah, loving, to be loved till life have end!"

So cried we, swaying in our craft of dream
launched on the ghost-white seas that wave and gleam,
and round black crags of jutting woodland bend;
while mocking-birds, across the moonhaze, send
auroral flashes lightning-like, that seem
flute-greetings to Love's unset sun supreme:—
"Ah, loving, to be loved, sweet fellow and friend!"

Since, lo, what clefts of stifling gloom;—and One, whom blood of the slain centuries cannot sate, sin-manifest, gripes all with sway of hate, bruising ideals, flower-children of Love's sun!

Ah, foolish Doubt! Death such, and Lord of Fate? If love be—life, and love—in death begun?

XIX.

ENVIRONMENT

My dainty Tree, that flauntest gay in air
the hoar-frosts and froth-snows of New-Year tide
in challenge to the spring-sun's golden pride
of warmth; dost Thou, white solitary, share
my joy in thee: alone so frail and fair,
among coarse rough-bark red-oaks, that deride
thy alien useless beauty; — every side
their envious sombre frown, and scornful stare?

"Full well her worth she know'th," one, passing, saith:
"Proud so to shine unrivalled; yea, alone!"
But at my side, one nigher to thee akin,
sigheth and murmureth, awesmit, under breath:—
"Where beauty is scorned, and holiness unknown,
believe, and blossom?" Ah, heavenly heroine!

BRIDAL DREAM

One huge perpendicular peak stands islanded in torrid plains to the sky's smoldering verge. A giant scales it, maddened by the scourge of hate for a world stark and gross and dead. Into the blue he lifts his blazing head and shades his eyes. Below, all things should merge in glare unsufferable:—a snow-soft surge of cloud sleeps prone upon the wind instead.

Beautiful 'neath her hair's flood of rich gloom her glory with tumultuous longing heaves,— which, terrible, his love as lightning cleaves, dissolving in a sunlit storm of bliss, whereat the waste world bursts in song and bloom. . . . And the Dreamer wakes a dreaming Bride to kiss.

XXI.

THE MOTHER

O beautiful wife, lying so still and pale
in the godly patience of true womanhood;
what wondrous smile as tho' in sooth we could
to thee be something! Thy wistful looks exhale
a fragrance heavenly, as lily of the vale
or dewy wildrose white. And O how good
to watch thee scan—while near thee hidden I stood—
our little One—vision for which words fail!

Thou being such, the worship my soul pays
to be called love, too pitiable it seems!
My glory still this ruinous debt to own,
and thine to be above the reach of praise;
whom, as the sun, Love's bliss rewards alone,—
the prodigal spending of thine own bright beams.

XXII.

LOVE'S MELODY

"What age, my dearest, would I have thee seem in heaven?" If God doth grant the spirit's prayer, mine be it to evoke (absolute swayer o'er divine seas of memory and dream) thee, thee of each successive glory and gleam: her that doth beggar—extravagant repayer of love's poor gift; her, ravishing gainsayer that doth, denying, grant the grace supreme.

Mine th' apple-cheeked, sloe-eyed, and cherry-lipped—
the Child; and mine the lithe, blythe, serious Maid;
and mine the Mother hallowed of strange joy;
the rhythm and melody of thee,—that dripped....
star-dew from mystic Rose that cannot fade!—
So would I, all eternities employ.

XXIII.

LOVE'S HARMONY

But thou dost fear that such high play should tire, conjuring ever thee, thee, only thee?

Hope's twinkle of starshine, dance of sunny glee, solution gloom of despair, white flash of noble ire, dusk of great awe, dawn-raptures that expire in glare of common day, moon-mystery of twilight-longing; these should breed ennui, often recurring, till they slew desire?

Then let there also be, Dear, counterpoint of manifold resource, subtle surprise: thee, thee, thy multitudinous selves, the notes in ever new procession; and every wise—

Thee simultaneously from choric throats to ever new joy-miracles conjoint!

XXIV.

INCARNATION

Fool, who the body of honor due deprives!

All beauty but reveals the spirit's urge
and will divine, that sweet extremes shall merge
in fashioning new forms for lovelier lives.

'Tis Love in flowers breweth honey, and Love in hives
storeth it. Ever one old splendor's dirge
another's birth-song! The creative surge,
foam-crested, still with roar of joy arrives.

O body, beautiful, pure, rapturous, warm—
who would in some seventh heaven to be up-caught,
insult thy glory; thine, visible holy form
of noblest soul, and extreme recompense,
oracular to sane enamored sense
of marvel and mystery too high for thought?

XXV.

LOVE'S SILENCE

Nay fool, poor fool! Th' perfervid lover's prayer—
It is not sacrilegious. God to man
must manwise speak his mandate; else who can
on earth hear, heed? Not He the heart's bewrayer;
of love, He clothed in beauty, disarrayer!
But wouldst thou verily end what He began,
out-thrusting forth the fury under ban,
whence flesh and soul, Accuser, and World-slayer?

Not so deluded we. Thy lover asks thee bride, friend, comrade, Beatrice, Aspasia, immaculate, adorable,—uttermost bliss of body and spirit—as heaven for all vain tasks of earth-life striven-in; and as euthanasia (if death be utter death) thy dying kiss.

A VISION OF NEW HELLAS

TO THE MUSE

Great was the joy of vision-the surprise of its first flash upon my spirit's eyes; happy the prospect of the poet's work, and proud the will no slightest task to shirk imposed by One, who gave me to behold part of His beauty-seen by men of old in Hellas. Nor could difficulties shake resolve-however sore the throbbing ache of fevered brow and temples. Whence endued was thus my soul with sacred fortitude? From whom the patience, till the stubborn brain. once more obedient to the spirit sane, in ecstasy toiled? From thee, O best One, came the best: thy praise reward sufficient, and thy blame in hesitant look and tone, supplying will for onset new. Thou who dost so fulfill all prayers of mine for truth, beauty, and good, in thine own self, thy blessed womanhood, dream-radiant eye, and subtly smiling lip, making earth heaven in the dear fellowship of thee and me,-thine be the reader's thank if never the song to ground exhausted sank, if on it sped, still spurning baser things,strong pinions spread of twin imaginings, to leap the chasms that broke athwart its course; thine be all joy therein-mine the remorse that with such help the song should not surpasa all songs sung hitherto. My shame, alas!yet as thine eye, O Dearest, I consultin what is thine shall not my spirit exult?

THE FORESONG

I.

The civilization of his day, (symbolized by his city in most odious atmospheric conditions,) fills the poet with a disgust of living. Yet he climbs a hill (of Hellenic culture) thence, to take, above the smoke-pall of sordidness, his last look at the heaven of all encompassing beauty.

Out of the town, drench'd by a penetrant wind-driven dust of rain, fast-gluing to the walls soot-flakes from grimy house-tops swept; paving courts, alleys, streets with a viscous mire; compacting the smoke-roof, propped by towers, spires, factory-chimneys, that threaten under the mass enormous to topple, and smother all life with gloom and stifling dismay; out of the dusk, wet, slime of the hideous town my soul was fain to escapestand on some dominant height for a moment,-behold once again the heav'n bare, vibrant with sun,or die!

II.

Industry cannot of itself seem noble, nor justify existence. Its modern proportions but belittle the soul.

For, one forge
of Hephaestos, the lame God,
seemed modern civilization.
A million anvils ring
with the blows of his sledge; to view
dissolving, on axles of light,
the huge wheels dizzily gyrate;
vast,—as of Titans, in Tartaros
fetter'd,—adamant knees
protrude, fold, stretch
with an agony rhythmical;
and the force of their breath
convulsive, the electric might
of their anger, by unwearying pull and push

scintillant beams convey in the service of pigmy man!

III.

For, modern civilization seem'd but the temple profane whose God,-Hermes of liars and thieves! Yards, choking with goods, his courts of high praise; ware-houses grim his places most holy; throng'd marts, (the booths, his altars!) shops, stores, and their counters for sacrifice constant-the sacred resorts of his popular worship. The streets his, with scurry of vehicles, whirr, rattle, roar of cars that transport votaries from shrine to shrine, On tracks, from all regions convergent, snort, bellow, shrick, jar with their train, locomotives, to freight quick and dead at phrenetical speed for His sake alone, whose victims, whose slaves, whose merchandise are all!

And trade completes the degradation which industry commences, till the things of the spirit are held cheap because unfit for barter and sale.

IV.

Hephaestos, artificer lame,—
Hermes, covetous, cunning,—
Gods of our time,
what have ye made of the race
once human? No beauty, no valor, no love!
Industry?—trade?—an ignoble war,
man clutching the throat of his fellow
to compel him disgorge his gold!
Dishearten'd, dispirited,
yet with one hope unavowed in my soul,

Arraigning these only Gods, these effectively dominant ideals of his fellows, he did not admit to himself his hope of finding a consolation in philosophy.

I climb'd the steep mount of culture Hellenic, for vision of better things—or, a scornful farewell to the world.

V.

But when above the smoke-pall of sordidness, he found the heaven shrouded by vast rain-clouds of philosophic pessimism and of religion falsely so called. Far roll'd soon under my sight astonish'd, the black voluminous surge of smoke-drear sky of who drudge in the city below. But, up-looking, my soul cried passionate for instant release: no rift of the heaven so achingly crav'd! Overlicad, a vague expanseinfinite cloud,the general despondency thick atheistical, whence-cold wind-driven dust of rain! Nought, nought, for the baffled eye of the spirit but the grey illimitable, shredding out rags of willess despair loathly loose into the flood of crass murk infernal, whose tumbling waves at my feet froth'd pitch! .

A SONG OF SONGS

DEMETER APPEARETH

I.

Behold

(if lore of names and of powers godly thou have, to assure fear-fascinate eyes) and declare, O rebellious soul, Who she be that walketh the welter of reek, as glebe blast-plough'd, gust-harrow'd, rain-sown? Mark (though shrouded in ample, grey mist-robes,) how shy moves She, and hesitant,wont to solitudes only of fields for miles under noon-sun awave, where crickets, incessant make hysterical mirth lest whispers, (o'erheard from lips not of flesh in shuddering, heavy wheat-ears,) dismay the silly folk small who flutter, creep, bask in the weeds or the seams of the tolerant ground. What shinewistful, unearthly not glad,-in her eyes? (Yet so, under banks dusk-green of heart-shap'd shields, fretted at edges, hang not the violets of coy delight their sweet heads? peep they not timorous, tear-twinkling at foot-sore passers-by?) Yea, and not sorrowful seemeth her mouth:

There appeareth to the poet a vision us of the goddess of harvest-home, who seemeth comforted of some dole by a spiritual solicitude for the weal of others, and self-oblivious beneficence. kind, as of one who her best giveth, for meed nowise of devotion or praise, but of strenuous necessity,—love, so great that it knoweth itself not, simple, serene!

II.

The poet, awed by the deity, is drawn by the mother in her, and recognizes the great Demeter of Eleusis. Who art thou, lofty of stature, noble of countenance,-hands extended as proffering solace? Mother of peace by endurance won, and of plenty wrested thro' sweat and patient abiding from soil else barren, I know thee! Dumb with awe at thy presence, shadowy Goddess, (whose virginal breast pillowed the turbulent sea-lord, earth-shaker, Poseidon,) dumb should I be, undesirously reverent, save that thy mother's palpitant heart, of tenderness infinite for comely Persephone, draweth, Eleusynian Demeter, to thee!

III.

The apparition or the poet's own spirit (which it be he cannot say) addresseth itself to console him, Nigher she came, loving lips parted, and words sorrow-wise, spake she of counsel, of comfort holy (repose in tone, in gracious demeanor, in wonderful gaze benign;) so, that who utter'd I knew not (a voice in my soul? or the speech of her eyes, of her mouth?) the soundless confession of truth:—

"Rightly, O son, thou deemest most ancient of woe-begone, loving Ones me! Is there gorge of distress impassable, heath snow-bound by savage winds harried, sun-scorch'd joy, stony waste, untrod of my feet in the day of cruel bereavement bruis'd sore, and bleeding? Hot tears, inconsolable, wept I not ages long?-Hearken my tale! The queen of plough'd lands, purple-mantled at dawn of the year, (through the quiet winter-nights wooed) to the storm-god of sea a daughter I bore. From babe in few days (or so seem'd they) miraculously budded she, bloom'd she to maidenhood gracious,-as sunbeams light-footed, like wells that up-bubble laughter-brimming. For hers, all bursting buds; hers, all uncurling fronds tender; all leaves, (golden-pale ere the sky of its blue tint them green,) hers alone: most belov'd, most lovable, yea, and of spirits the loveliest. Yet she, daughter of Goddess immortal, (mighty to bless, to curse with abundance or famine,) yet she, daughter of God terrific, (whose wave-steeds foamy-man'd neigh as they run, paw, leap, fierce-rending with bitless mouths the wrecks of stoutest-bow'd ships,) she, she, raped of the fearful gloom, bride of death, queen of hell? She not undying? Bare wold, cold flood eternal?-yet shethe blossom sea-father'd, earth-mother'd, she, she perisheth? E'er under heav'n hath woman, hath man

telling the nature of Demeter's immortal sorrow, which sprang of her joy in love, and her love of known pangs that I suffer'd not direr, acuter? The evil-eyed, gloating, my torment, insatiate, beheld. Not mine the refuge of silence that brooks no intrusion; to life without end, to despair everlasting, doom'd!"

V.

and also how she was comforted in her bereavement by a vision of the joy at the core of things, and all enfolding,—a joy sincere, unironical, self-communicative.

"But out of the bed-rock of grief, stark, gelid,-no Zeus-hurl'd bolt could shatter,-of its own extreme tension asunder cloven, forth-gush'd Solace, a crystal-pure fount, that quench'd (as I stoop'd me fever-hot lips to cool) the death-thirst. Then I hated no more the order unchanging of causes, the chain link in link of events without first without last. Then, no more wept I, perversely, to see the sun's vigor of youth unabated; and over the shift and drift of low cloud, star-radiant still the blue firmamental, unwrinkled with thought. Then, then I perceiv'd, the Rapture (in all that is latent, and far outreaching beyond the uttermost nought) implied for cark and care human no scorn derisive:-reckless of mind-fret and heart-ache (strange to itself, and irrelevant) wherefore?-if not, in moment of passion's lull, hush of fury's exhaustion,-audibly sweet as a peace divine to intrude at length in the sufferer's soul?"

VI.

Learning that death is the author of life's glory, she "Aidoneus! Aidoneus
Him I had curs'd, bride-deflowerer,— mocker
at sport with rent petals, dead leaves,—

wept no more for the lost Perseph-

blighter,-scattererspurner underfoot of the fairone. whom never at heart (since hateful, sullen, foul,) I believ'd to be God,-in his very Self appear'd to me then, of living things maker; deviser of form, and of increase in might; cherisher, fosterer silent of beauty; whose mystical touch worketh wonders forever! Astonish'd, vet more I marvell'd that ever woe-misted these eyes of mine so blind became to mis-read the myth of the seasons recurrent. For, lo, is it not He who clippeth of wheat, of rye, the tresses ripe-sunny? and who if not He with flail of affliction from full sheaf driveth, (relaxing the hold of kindly husks) the bare grain? And whose if not His the harsh breath, to shrill tunes of scorn, as flurry of fine snow whirling aloft, under drear skies ashen, the chaff? From my hand, tight-clench'd, 'tis He snatcheth the choicest for seed in darkness to waste, damp-swollen, and rot? Yet who if not He (as the corn under sun, for nurture of men ground, cometh in blush of maid, glow of youth, battle's might, cometh in mother's milk, joyous cry, laugh of babe,) who if not He in due season biddeth arise the new year's vaster harvests, ghost-pallid? Aidoneus, who, if not Thou God of death?"

VII.

"Wherefore, summer's Goddess, a rite faithful and holy of loyal sons I exact, whensoe'er thro' rich loam by steer-drawn plough the furrow is cut:with solemn jubilation, therein

And that mortal grief might have immortal cure, she shared her heavenly wisdom with such as experienced anguish like hers.

newborn shall be laid an infant-the token that life (yea theirs, as of wheat, as of rye) upspringeth from th' gloom, death-begotten. For my soul, when the sense it conn'd of the mystery erst indiscernible, cull'd (dejected no longer) wholesome fruit-heart's ease, quiet cheer of well-doing-to men grief-smit the deep lore imparting in grove Eleusynian. And none whom I taught fear'd darkness thereafter, nor dust, nor cold sweat at the close. Aidoneus, of terrors grim King, most ruthful I showed to them. Her, (whom folk in their folly awful fabled, the daughter of Styx stagnant river corrupt, inexorable Queen of Hades,) to all I revealed as none other than pure Persephone, her lap heap'd with red poppies-oblivion of ache, of vexation,-yea and with white poppies,-dream-hopes of a whiter dawn. So the grief, O my son, thenceforth at parting in glee of welcome is swallowed. The end lo! no end,—but start more exultant; the cycle of life no tedious round,-a ring for processional dance; and behold, even I, Mother Earth, the venerable, wax youthful again; and singing, singing with a myriad myriad stars through the thrill'd heaven's vastitude whirl, blissful; for, ever to Aidoneus content I surrender my children, whom Aidoneus again forever restoreth more mighty, more fair!"

DIONYSOS COMETH

The words of Demeter in my ears still tremulous, persuasively sweet; -- wind-wafted from the mingling of cloud-sky dun and the unquiet sea of dinginess-Voices as of maidens, for an alien grief tear-dew'd, but at heart life-glad, came gradually closer and clearer:-

From the horizon's edge cometh sound of singing.

B

Why sigh we and cry we, as nigher we draw to her, When the words appall'd by her tallness and awful demeanor? The violence and silence of Hades are law to her, yet wailing seem'th sweeter Demeter to thee, weeping than smiling, howling than laughter! Griev'd One, bereav'd One, thy child-hast thou seen her? Time now brings showers; yet unfailingly after calls the gay hours to delight us, yea, dry away tears from all eyes, while our doubt-clouds fly away

wax intelligible they prove to be a greeting to Demeter;

from the bright of the sky, and are drown'd in the sea!

So fresh were the Voices and so full, youth-cheery, irresistible;—smiles straight followed in the wake of the sage words sung to a distinct rhythm of dance; and the mother of Persephone, the gracious, replied

but the singers, it is clear, ignorant of her comfort, misconceive her mood;

sweet-smiling to me. Once more, swell'd closer the melodious chorus:-

and, wearying of lament, resume the praise of their chosen deity, as though the salutation to another might seem disloyal.

Ho! go you and show you a holier joy in him, employ you your voices in boisterous hollos, for know you not, know you not Semele's boy in him, with whom you would toy once, you coy Ones, of old? Noisily extol him, lowlily sue him!

Woe doth he sow and a joy-crop follows.

Lo! you owe homage and honor unto him!

Grow you, O grow you, O vines of his choosing, flow you, O flow you, O grapes of his bruising, to the glory alone of your God of the bold!

а

The sire of their God, acknowledges his glorious son;

Then knew I, unseen yet, the devout blithe singers. But suddenly, loud roar'd Zeus, the cataclysmal. His clouds broke, cloven, and a bolt clear'd the atmosphere. Luminous the azure of the heavens through the rift burst happily in; sun-showers stream'd laughing from the frayed storm-edges.

γ

whereupon the Maenads (female devotees of Dionysos) appear, and encircle Demeter, The surge of crass murk froth'd pitch no longer:—bronze-red, ablaze, hurtling to foam of gold, spurting quick spray of fire, tumbling in glory.

For, leaping and crying, a rout of wild women, with faun-skins loose-vested, limbs gleaming, locks flying in whirl orgyastic, surrounded the mother majestic and calm:—

He cometh, he cometh, ('Tis he! 'tis he!) young again from barbarous Thracia, to Icaria, the wild; o'er the isles of the sea from Phrygia, the rocky, and Asia!

From the gloom
of the tomb
he came, he came—
God of gush,
God of flow,
the same, O the same
God of flush
and of glow,
and the uproar of flame.

singing of the expected advent of Bacchus;

δ

Oh! heard ye not, heard ye not told and retold the story of his wonderful birth? begott'n of the Highest, he is God of the bold; of the Fairest born, God of their mirth!

of his miraculous divine begetting and of his beautiful human birth;

Speak out, shout, shout his name, his name! God of wine, God of fire, the same, O the same of divine mad desire of the death-leap, and fame!

Blessed Semele,—virgin
who daredst to die
thy glory to merge in
that of Zeus the most high,—
passion-whirls that we surge in
thy feet cannot wet;
rejoice, O white virgin,
where suns never set!

of his virgin mother, now beyond carnal stain; of Zeus's wooing and recognition by her, The God of heav'n saw thee and lov'd thee, and wooed; lest his glory o'er-awe thee as shepherd he sued; but thou knewest him, Bride of God, thro' the human disguise, sweet Joy of God, Pride of God, Light of his eyes!

€

of her rapture in the God.

"O Zeus, who didst fashion it—
my body be thine,
so thou flash forth, God passionate,
thy glory divine."
In delirious surrender
of rosy-hued flesh
Thou didst cry: "Slay with splendor,
and create me afresh!"

δ

The Maenads see their God a-far, and forget his birth in him. He cometh, he cometh! 'Tis he, even he, son of Semele!—Hail, Dionysos, from the low, and the mean, and the base to set free,—from ourself, to thy height to entice us!

God fearless,
God peerless,
O come, O come!
At thy glance
who, O God,
can be dumb? can be dumb?
Tread the dance,
that ye trod,
to flute, pipe, and drum!

HYMN TO DIONYSOS THE ELEMENTAL

I. A young Maenad singeth

Stay near us to cheer us, dire God of the panting heat! Pray hear us, hear, hear us! Fireshod be thy alighting feet, that in spasm volcanic thy mount may awake; rend open a chasm, and with panic earth shake! From the crater, Titan-hater, let the lava-streams fall, and char near and far as they luridly crawl. In thick dark sow the spark to enkindle the pine: higher, higher leap thy fire with a thunder divine!

A young Maenad praises Dioynsos as God of elemental fire

II. Semi-chorus of young Maenads

water-streams, plant-growth.

All the younger God of swollen springs bursting; torrent-roar of wild force, Macnads laud him uprooting the trees, and damming its course; as God of raging of floods, boulder-rolling, to the plain down-hurl'd; and of luxuriant of the landslip that crasheth on a slumbering world; -Dionysos, thy ravage at length hath an end: for thy violence savage is the wrath of a friend. Lo! thy vast vegetation upshooteth to cloak the seared devastation with pine, laurel, oak.

III. An older Maenad singeth

An older Maenad prays to Dionysos as God of secret treasures.

O God of the mysteries hid below ground, of the bed of thy red gold gloom-hoarded, keep them ever impenetrable to light and to sound, from the smutch of the clutch of the sordid. So, the mystical treasures in deeps of man be thine, O God, only with glad eye to scan. Yet, at times (as thy river Pactolus of old for thy faithful adorer wash'd up nuggets of gold) when the anguish grows sorer than the proud soul can bear, with glimpse of our God-self, Life-giver, console us. and vanquish this human despair!

IV. Semi-chorus of older Maenads

Man from good unto better must go, from better, e'er on to the best: thy guest in the life that we know is in death, that we know not, thy guest. God, marshaller of spirits victorious too great for earth longer to house, lead us, lead us to a world more glorious there to revel with thee and carouse! Thy grape-blood burns in our veins, and with madness our brains are on fire! on fire! We rise with thee, God, from the real to explore the eternal ideal inspire us, inspire us, inspire! Heaven's freedom from earth-bonds that bind us let our spirits, O God, anticipate. For a moment the shadows that bind us dissipate! dissipate! dissipate! We follow thee on, we follow skim the air more swift than swallow! O ye wicked, ye fools, he hath sapp'd your foundations of carnal joy! Your lies no more shall win you us: ours, ours the ecstatical rapture of the Gods (Evoi! O Evoi!) the rapture of onrush continuous! (Evoi! Evoi!)

All the older Maenads extol him as the God of immortality and spiritual vision.

V. All the Maenads in chorus

All hail to the God who died of man's woe, in man's stead, now deathless and glorified, King of the blessed dead! Maenads, wave, wave your green-flaming thyrsus

Together all the Maenads hail him as the Titan-slain God who secureth everlasting blisses for the faithful. as you leap for his praise in the whirl of the dance: hail, hail him the Saviour of incredible mercies, Lord eternal of fate, God the master of chance!

THE COLLOQUY

I.

Demeter maketh known unto Dionysos her office of consoler, eliciting the human out of the torture of mankind. Their hymn of worshipful praise declaring the godhead occult of their Lord, to a close devout sung,—
The God of the heavenly dew, a stillness ensued; and Demeter, lifting her eyes to those of the flush'd divine youth, became ancient in look, all the light of her wisdom veil'd.

—"Art thou

Demeter, mother of comfort from sorrow for men?"

-"Yea, son," answered she mild, "by cruel hardship ever the good from the ill are dissever'd. Persephone fair, from the grave returneth whither she went with all mortals down; but the foul wax old in their death, and each (as memory in turn effaceth memory, recall'd in the mind) fades utterly out of the world. Wherefore, my worshippers so teach I pain and bereavement to bear, that they rise from brute up to man his stature, dignity, calm."

"Well,"- retorted the beauteous youth, his eyes as he spake awful with shine inhuman,--"Mother, well hast thou said. To man thou leadest; but I, unbeheld, drive on thy worshippers up to the god. Aidoneus, King of death, King of hell, is none other than I, who greet thee, Dionysos, Lord of life, Lord of earth, leader of the blessed to the highest heaven. The good, who survive the law of thy Deity, they my quarry are, mine Dionysos Zagreus, pitiless huntsman, torturer, flesh-feaster, blood-quaffer, the barbarous God. Bruis'd, crush'd, shall the grape-berry be; whence, pouring, the life-juice transmute I to fluid fire! Yea, the hero, strong, brave, soul-fast, faithful, upright,

Dionysos replieth that his function is ever to express from the human the godly. He (life and death being mystically one) identifieth himself with Aidoneus (Hades, Pluto) and setteth forth his awful anthropophagous rite.

Yea, the hero, strong, brave, soul-fast, faithful, upright, unto death I pursue, that in death deified, they I maddened with murderous hate shall adore Him, (in death life-glories forth-showing they dream'd not of) me in Him whom they slew, even me beholding, their God; and a love fervent for Him, shall breed of remorseful hearts—issue divine, heroes innumerous as stars in the heaven!"

HYMN TO DIONYSOS, THE HERO-GOD

I.

Semi-chorus of older Maenads

Enthusiastic, the Maenads celebrate their winter orgies in the mountains to arouse the sleeping God of natural life who would else let the earth perish with him.

What is it he said? Hath he fled? Hath he fled? Dionysos, the Hero-God, dead? dead? dead? Up, up to the barren hill-pass swept of winter-blast chilling, barefooted, barehead, ere manhigh the snow-drifts amass! We will drink not nor eat. but the hard-frozen ground we will beat with our feet, and Pan-hoof shall pound to drum and shrill fife till the Dead come to life! Bromios! Bromios! hark, the timbrel's hoarse roar, wail of wind, hoot of owl, scream of eagle, wolf-howl,wilt thou lead us, boisterous God, no more? To the rhythm of our phrenzy, ye north-blasts, shriek; about us, ye snow-drifts, wheel and reel; till (the death-spell too weak for the God whom we seek,) He shall rise and his glory reveal. Lo, death is dead, and his spell is sped! Thou hast conquered our mortal shame!

Let the cymbals clash, and the avalanche crash as we summon Thee, God, by name.

Semi-choruses of Pans

1

We Pans, we Pans, to butt and to gore we have horns that are sore, and our legs are a goat's not a man's. Beware, beware, with our nails we tear, and we lash with our barbed tails. Like beasts, we rend with our teeth the rash who Zagreus, the huntsman, offend. We have ears as the lynx, and a fool! who thinks from the leer of our eyes to escape; for the snow-flake's fall miles off we hear, and a leaf-shadow's shape we spy through the thick night's pall.

The Pans glory in their deformity and in their supernatural powers;

2

Woe! woe! to the Man — though thou send him — who cometh, great God, in thy place: we will butt, each Pan, gore and rend him, and tear him limb

and threaten the emissaries of their God who shall dare, obedient to his hest, stand in his room.

from limb!
devour his flesh torn,
lap and gulp his blood spill'd,
till we free
from the mask thy face,
and see
the quiet smile of high scorn,
and thy spiritual eyes fire-fill'd!

Full chorus of Pans

3

Yet they show that in the tragic death the God is glorified and the hero made truly his revealer. For blessed, thrice-blest, the death that reveals thee; of thy fury possess'd the great life that feels thee: and deep, deep the abysses be of terrific despair, that steep, steep may the blisses be whose peaks cleave the air! In the tragic death-strife from the blood-drunk sod springs the beauty of life that showeth Thee, God.

HYMN TO DIONYSOS, THE HERO-GOD

II.

Semi-chorus of the younger Maenads

1

O Pans, in the waste hill-gorges not vain were our mid-winter orgies: for his earthquake answers the trampstamp of dancers, in new-got strength appearing at length: Lord of fire, water, gold, wine, song, dance, mirth; the great God of the bold and the strong of the earth! O flute, O drum, O tabor and cymbal, back you'll us bring with loud scream, and leap nimble to the ancient hill-top bald! Iacchos the oft-shouter, is come whom appall'd we call'd, yea, come with miraculous Spring. He hath sent a year of plenty that his faithful should fast not. The spell of dark Hell-

Enthusiastic, the Maenads announce the vernal resurrection of the God of natural life, and praise him. we knew well
it could last not:
Iacchos hath overcome it!
(how else could the strife result?)
Up, up the sheer summit,
you Bacchic rout,
to exult,
as ye raise
the shout
of his praise,
in the heat of his mystical cult.

2

They describe his advent to the heights, athwart the flats, and the wild rush of his worshippers to meet him with shout and dance.

On a chariot swift-drawn of panthers and leopards at dawn he appeared to the terrified shepherds, Silenos alone for fellow! and, behold, the meadow he dashed thro' grew gold, as his god-glory flashed thro', with narcissi sunny-yellow; and roses wine-purple, flame-tawny, lily-white, burst abloom in his lightning track; the vines hung big clusters of berries, in a night, grapes glaucous, grapes sanguine, grapes swarthy blue-black; the trees of the orchard, the trees of the forest became quick-quivering, high-roaring, fire-tongues of green. 'Gainst death with life's beauty, O Iacchos, thou warrest the whole world to make lustrous, tho' thyself be unseen. Wherefore in festal glee, brandishing torches aflare, thy mad maidens (as pours the volcano a lava-stream lurid that seethes and that scorches) to the valley forth-sally to the plain, to the plain, O! to meet with laughter, peals upon peals, jubilant hollo and yell, O! Iacchos the God who our rapture feels and Silenos, his master and fellow.

Chorus of Satyrs

1

Not one of us, fierce quaffers
though we shamble, totter, stagger,
not one of us, coarse laughers,
in the train of the God is a lagger.
We are goat-thighed, like Pans, and lascivious,
obscene in our humorous jests;
yet, O Maenads, of your lips why give ye us,
of your waists, no joy, and your breasts?
Too fleet of foot, agile, alert, you
fly on in your spirited folly.
Yet, O Maenads, no Satyr would hurt you,
bliss-drunken, and amorous-jolly.

The Satyrs pronounce themselves, for all their baseness, true servants of the God.

2

Little know ye your God if ye scorn us: your God, He also is ours; for Silenos's sake love hath he borne us and a function assigned to his powers. Dionysos, the only God, jealous, He hateth a rival base. Then who be men's idols, tell us, whose favor they seek, and grace? Ours, ours is the God's commission to shatter their images, cleave faith from superstition, distinguish what seems from what is! Stalk forth thou bragging claimant to worship! 'Tis we who shall settle the debt to thee owed of the fool. We must make thee enough, yea quick payment in truest, most precious metal of comical ridicule. The people with laughter we initiate in the mysteries of heroism divine would ye wish yet more gods to propitiate having known once the supreme God of wine?

For, as tragedy arose from the anthropophagous feast, so comedy began with the drunken revel. Theirs also is a high, if not the highest, office.

THE TRANSFIGURATION

I.

The effect of the hymn of worship showeth itself in a revelation to their eyes of the God's glory. Lo! while the elder Maenads, intoxicate, chanted the winter-praise boisterous of Bromios; while the Thracian huntsman (harrier remorseless of human game, Zagreus, man-eater) the Aegipans ferocious loud lauded in madness of savage rites gory; the while maiden Maenads, grief-ignorant, of Iacchos, earth-quickener, soul-kindler, ecstatical sang; and while the Satyrs, mock-awesome, Dionysos exalted (foster child of Silenos, their chief,) for the exhilarant laugh of his mouth; - behold! in his votaries' midst, the one Lord of their various moods shone transfigured - and, ringwise environed with multiplied visions emanative, drave Maenads, Pans, Satyrs back, extending their circle of worship, the more at the center his Godhead forthflashed.

II.

For from Dionysos emanate the Dryads, the Oreads, the Naiads, the three Charities, and the Muses three—various aspects of his deity separately embodied Of bush and of tree the chaste spirits into being first leapt, with leafage arrayed, happy Dryads, blossom-crown'd, their arms all together upthrown, wildly waving green boughs in his honor; the Oreads, shy, the Hill-nymphs, scarce veiling with misty robes their lithe shapes,

hand-in-hand glided; and next the Naiads of bubbling wells, frolic brooks, shamelessly glad, flaunted as briar-roses fragrant their bare bodies light-dartling, dewy-wet from the pure and cool element. Thus ring within ring expanded, until, to right and to left of the deity, gleam'd (their locks tight-loop'd lest a ray of their naked effulgence, a line of their grace be obscur'd,) the Charities three; and, as holy as they, their virginal beauty from eyes profane close-drap'd, reflecting the fiat creative, their sisters three smil'd the Muses.

III.

Entranc'd the order'd, yet waywardly fleet interlacings I watch'd of the complicate dance: the shimmer, the white glow of limbs; the sweep float, flutter of drapery; the floor of shine aquiver to the numberless trip incessant - feet of light diffusing quick spiritual rhythm, unheard of the ear, as perfume strange from tropic flower intense, bewildering the mind. Then I turn'd to scan the noble serene countenance kindly of mother Demeter. But, sudden her eye with bliss unwonted elate, (as of strange recognition, immediate, incredible,) straightway the beam of her gaze I follow'd perforce. And lo!

The transfiguration is completed by the appearance of Persephone as his queen in *1:e midst of all the glory. at the palpitant life-god's side
a tranquil apparition of girlish
loveliness,—blue vein'd temples, and hair
wheat'n-yellow, with poppies enwreath'd! None other,
assuredly none than the sweet
Persephone, so
with utter trust as a child's
the God's hand could hold, or as she
look in his dreadfully glorious face,
with bride's proud blushful regard.

IV.

Thereupon Demeter embraceth her child, and addresseth words of love to her. Demeter's heart brimm'd visibly full, and ran over with blessedness mute. At length her emotion mastering: "Child," she cried, "O my child, thou of Spring's swollen buds, of silken leaves pale, of velvety fronds that ravel, of blossomy shoots, -- speak, speak, -is it thee, my own, I behold? Art thou, in very truth, spouse of the great life-giver? Aidoneus rap'd thee not? bare thee not hellward? in hideous gloom secluded thee ne'er? Or, perchance hast thou chang'd him, thou with thy love, from cruel, obscene King of dearth, desolation, despair, to a God of exuberant excesses and lustrous beatitude?"-Reverently still the tumultuous host of the God's adherents became, as Daughter and Mother, long-parted, embrac'd speechless; and Tree-nymphs, Hill-nymphs, Water-nymphs, Charities, Muses, all fastened with tender delight on the Twain their eyes, and not few the holy tears that with bliss of reunion starrily sparkled.

"Daughter dear," at last Demeter resum'd, "well knew I indeed ere sight I had of thee, Child only-belovèd, all, all that befell thee. But knowledge, (unto mourners expounded of me through the ages,) faded, the instant I saw thy face, to memories vague as of some wild adventure, dream-heard, impossible. For verily, Child, my child, oft they, who when sorrows oppress have belief, if they meet face to face the desire of the heart are incredulous utterly. Now that however I know what I knew, and believe, well-knowing,-all that ere this I well-knew, believing - no phrenzy predictive seizeth my soul; but clearly methinks, and in absolute calm, I foresee such coming of thine with thy lord unto me, not without blessing for man shall have happen'd. My power, of thine seconded, Daughter, availeth from dark non-existence to call Aphrodite once more, the beauty of flesh to the light of the world, that She the broken-hearted console, and help the life-loathing; - as once thy mother of old She strengthen'd to bear bereavment unspeakable, -- yea, with a promise sure of to-day's encounter. For what signified else her smile insistent, persuasive, unless even this it declar'd: that never

Demeter now in her joy remembereth that in her darkest moment Aphrodite appeared to her, and, out of gratitude, she wisheth now to summon her into life again.

from earth, sky, sea, could the beautiful wholly pass, or perish from body and spirit of man?"

VI.

Dionysos accepteth Demeter instead of his lost mother, Semele, and Demeter loveth him as a son.

"So be it even as thou, Mother, hast said," replied the bloom-goddess turning in alternate joy of heart and soul from parent to lord, from lord to parent,- a yearning unknown to herself, beyond speech, in her look. Yet each, understanding, eved strangely the other, one probing instant; and first, Dionysos in her his mother beholding, (rever'd Semele, from infancy mourn'd,) relax'd his scrutiny, extending a hand adoptive; and she, Demeter (the wise from experience of ill, the glad in goodness perpetual,) knew then in Him the son divine of her soul. But aware of the triple felecity, no longer repressible, the Naiads burst into praise: Aphrodite, the queen, hailing,- the blessed, the beauteous, who, unwitting, gave to the sorrow-bowed strength of endurance, and hope to the soul-sick of yore.

THE HYMN TO APHRODITE

1

The merry Naiads sing of their own childish sport;

Gay spirits we of leaping wells trickled unabash'd over moss'd knobs, rough fells; thro' dingles, bloomy dells tinkle-tinkle we plash'd; in hill-hollows rallied,
we rush'd with loud laughter-screams;
spray-spurting, dilly-dallied
in iridescent, foam-pallid
green pools for day-dreams;
then,
again,
wild, uproarious,
all, together, we leapt
with the waterfalls glorious,
and ocean-ward swept.

2

Wondrous news from sandy shore-lands we heard of the summer-breeze; for far never, never far are the heights of jutting forelands from the spume of Hellenic seas. Dionysos, O imperious, bid our sisters,— Nymphs of Nereus,—recount us the marvels as they be; lest they tease us, worry, weary us gay Naiads, tho' we emanate from thee!

but, hearing strange gossip, they implore that their father command the sea-nymphs not to withhold the truth from them.

3

O Hill-nymphs, O Tree-nymphs, why stayed ye at home? for we saw all the Sea-nymphs, joy-drunken, toss the foam. Aphrodite that morn, the mighty, was born a girl-babe merrily cradled of a wave: and they caught her (sweet daughter

They are rewarded for their frantic race to the salt sea, by a vision of Aphrodite's birth.

she, of blue sky, blue sea)
yea, and bare her off verily
to a crystalline cave
with frolic and laughter and boisterous glee!

4

They relate circumstances of her rearing and tell of the miracles wrought by her moidenly beauty. Bubbles, pearls, corals and goldfish red her pretty childish toys; hide-and-seek, with the Nymphs, o'er the deep seabed—a rollicking, innocent noise! But quickly their foundling, their foster-child her playmates outgrew and their games: hers the girlhood mild sweet, undefiled, whose beauty the sea-brute tames! To men and to Gods it is time she be shown in her loose locks of amber array'd, that the sea wash her feet with motherly moan and the blue sky acknowledge the maid.

5

Her journey, on the day of her showing to sky and sea, is described as a triumphal progress to the sacred isle of Cyprus.

In a concave billow they lay her down, white arm for soft pillow, gushing curls for gay gown. O'er the silk-smooth pellucid boat stretch a rainbow-woof sail to hill-hornèd Cyprus float bark fair and frail! Her attendants summon clamorously light Zephyros to blow. Lo! he panteth, heart-amorously, and flying they go! The Mermaids laugh, sing, and for gladness upfling their beauteous arms bubble-shiny; whom the Mermen escort with hollo and snort,

eyes on fire, cheeks swollen, beards briny. From his ram's horn sends the Triton lustily skyward a musical jet; sea-horses splash, dolphins spout: gustily mounts the spray, scattering, to light on the naked Goddess, her maidens devout,—an attire many-beaded of twinkling wet! Sly old Proteus her wizard forerunner is to quell the waves' turbulent riot; behold! heaven's glory upon her is, and before her the vast sea's quiet.

Chorus of the Charities

FINALE

Between sister and sister no disparity of beauty age or degree; we are each a gracious Charity, one in love, but in loveliness three. Yet we hail thee, Aphrodite, who art fairer than we be in worshipping eyes: who soothest with hope the despairer thy beauty than wisdom more wise. Thy grace never waneth, ever waxeth immortal Delight of mankind! Thy hold on our hearts who relaxeth? for thy smiles are the bonds that bind. Thou makest living joys out of griefs that are dead; as thou walkest, silver-footed, the day lust-monsters writhe under thine airy tread whom thy naked lustre doth slay. The Gods, yea, men likewise, no longer fear the glory of flesh and carnal pride if Thou, O peerless, O sane, art near for by Thee are they purified.

The Charities cheerfully acknowledge her superiority to themselves and highly extol her holy virtue.

THE RECONCILIATION

I.

Dionysos declareth that indeed it is now high time beauty (Aphrodite) be once again associated with use.

Holy Mother, sage and good, heard have thy ears even now, ravish'd, my lightsome Naiads, my Charities spiritual, utter in cadence the praise melodious of Her that shall once again charm, (thou hast said,) as in days of their youth, mankind. For verily, O Mother, long hath lasted the night already of toil, unhallow'd by joy in the task; the night - all eyes blinding but such as glare cat-like with criminal craft; too long!

II.

He comments on the story of beauty's having wrought relief from acute sorrow, whence, in due season, Demeter's wisdom; When grieving well nigh in Thee, immortal, the goddess had slain, thou wast sav'd by the life-joyous smile that in sorrow's despite a smile responsive compell'd ajar to set the doors of thy soul's prison? And slid not Hope in tiptoe, and close at her heels, Desire of life, her lover constant, who took each a languid hand of thine, leading with tender violence

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out of thy cell dark, grim, bare, Thee, to freedom divine once more?
Yet, as therefore Thou to the Cyprian Goddess the debt unpaid rememberest, Mother, so I to the son, Delos-born, of Leto owe a friend's undying thank.

III.

Phoibos Apollo! shimmer quick-shifting of streams that upwell and outflow; shine of my gold wash'd pure; light-ray of my fire volcanic; oracular counsel uttered at large from my core unconscious of things; the vision's preternatural clearness in them I intoxicate; truth serene, (first dimly discern'd from height ecstatic, whither the spirit I lifted,) in hours of intelligent quiet remember'd and understood; O Pythian Phoibos Apollo who slayest ever anew with arrow of sanity the monster of over-faith, Thee of the peak Parnassian, twin mount unto mine, Thee, Thee will I summon from agelong sleep!

and resolveth on his part to arouse disinterested intelligence (Apollo) from long slumber;

IV.

For, nowise

Demeter, O Mother

true of Persephone, thy child

I ravish'd, pain to inflict

on one who lov'd her, and whom

not knowing I therefore lov'd; but assur'd

thou couldst never my heart's passion know, nor fate's

recalling the service it (Apollo) rendered to enthusiasm (Dionysos) by making the latter gentle and sane.

doom irreversible whereby thou borest Her, and didst rear to maidenhood only that mine she should thenceforth be; assur'd that willingly not to any couldst Thou, her mother, yield one so desirable; therefore forc'd was I, Lord of life, in the odious guise of the Ghost-god unreal on Her whose favor I crav'd violent hands to lay. But thereafter my soul's own brother, Apollo, the fierceness extreme of my deity ancient, sooth'd; so that even Persephone, timid and gentle, could forgive, nay, her ravisher cherish as now!

V.

Aphrodite and Apollo will both develop the body, each one viewing it as the supreme means to all good ends. Behold, thy labors (O Mother of Her who is mine and thine) shall be match'd by labors as gladsome. For Thou of the rude and gross, (the pressure continuous of pain ennobling, refining,) wilt fashion, by little and little, the beauty of golden Aphrodite again; while I from the stony-hard gloom at the stroke heroic, death-dealing, at length shall elicit the fire and the light of the Loxian. To grace She shall perfect, for service of love, the body; which He to feats athletic will hard'n at the hest of the manly mind. With charm of the lovely, She and with hope, assuageth men's grief; while the end afar off perceiving, He,

clearsighted, by knowledge controls the passion that else, rebellious, would reason overthrow.

VI.

So, sweeten'd thy memories

of the old bereavement shall be,
that never again couldst thou wish,

Mother Demeter, the past
alter'd in ought, or the fatal
decree overrul'd. The rougher
the rind of life's fruit,
the sweeter the juice thereof
express'd from the seeded pulp! Nay, wouldst Thou
again to reach the broad, warm,
fertile plains of peace, not press
thro' the icy gorge of anguish—
feet bleeding and bruis'd—
once more?

Dionysos expresseth the true philosophy of affiction.

THE HYMN TO APOLLO

1

Ever, from the womb
of the witless hour,
(of her beauty and power
unaware,)—
the wisest thoughts of man
are born,
most holy and most fair.
Ever, from the tomb
of a right
men
scorn,—
wingeth,
(singeth
in death's despite,)

The Oreads sing (by way of prelude to their hymn of Apollo) the praises of Leto (the hidden) his mother.

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a spirit again of godlier might. Ever, from the gloom of the cloud-hid night folding the earth in sadness,—springeth at morn the Lord of the light, and King of azure gladness.

2

They remember the fall of Zeus's clandestine wooing of Leto;

By the banks of the stream of sleep, and the lake of dream still, deep, the dark Night stray'd a starry, chaste maid, and dipped her feet in the water to wade; when the white sky's Light his splendor effac'd, to glide undescried as a lustrous, proud swan to her bashful side. But, alas! of his ruffled plumes unafraid, alas! for the woe he wrought her, poor maid.

3

and recount how she fared at the hands of wicked mankind who had not heard thereof. The home she forsook of her girlhood, in shame, and sought out a lone spot to die; yet soon for her child's sake, unborn, she came to abodes of mankind far and nigh, in Zeus's name, the hospitable, food humbly imploring, and shelter.

But, boorish, men void of pity thought scorn of her plea; women, rude,

insolent when they felt her sore plight, jeer'd, foully-witty: "What? Zeus? God Zeus was thy lover! 'twere impious to doubt of his truth; so we dare not provide for thy want," they cried, "be assur'd his sky-roof guest-friendly will cover and the bread of his board feed - the bride of his youth!" That, cruel, the shaft her sick heart might pierce when Leto totter'd and pal'd, they gloated and laugh'd, and in mockery fierce her as maiden-mother they hail'd. Little knew they that ever God claimeth the child by man unclaim'd! -Woe, woe! who a mother shameth, forsaken - for he shall be sham'd!

4

Horror smitten, of their lowland and highland men saw a rich vale, a steep hill by Zeus, thundering, riven:-an island afloat at the waves' wild will! And swift with the current it carried the outcast far from their sight, while the coarse women, maids yea, and married, lay prone on the earth with affright. Lo! in seabound Delos, the manifest isle, bereft of all human comfort and aid, writhes Leto, the hid, in a rocky cleft, of the awful end afraid. With child of a God, sore be her throes; loud-shrieking, is her frail flesh torn,then, utter hush ensues and repose. Is it death? Nay, Apollo is born!

Zeus cometh to her aid, miraculously fashioning out of a promontory the floating isle of Delos, where her travail overtaketh her. Leto is bidden note the power and the love of Zeus, in that he hath transferred to Delos the very stream and lake on whose banks he won her; and the portents in honor of her son's birth are rehearsed.

Mother Leto, awake! What? Mopos the stream of life's sleep, and the azure lake of love's dream still deep, aflash with the sun's clear rise, do thine eyes not recognize? Dost thou not feel the earth immense under thee heave and shake with a mad, convulsive mirth? Hark! the depth of grey Ocean vents in waves of applause that break on shore-sands shiny, his joy at the wonderful birth. The winds waft fragrance ambrosial from sky-banks aflower; victorious palms, laurels lustrously ever-green leap from the crag, and the hillside bare, to embower Thee, mother of daylight, Thee, Leto, unseen! Flocks of swan-cloudlets from Asia come swimming thro' air and encircle from East unto West seven times, the risen Apollo hymning, the sacred isle that offer'd thee rest. Palm-pillars of gold, laurel-capital'd, vast, up-shoot from truth's unplumbed ground under-sea, the rocking cradle of myth to make fast forever, in honor of him and of thee; and the Cyclades all, at the blaze of his power shall encompass it, footing a miraculous reel, transform'd to cloud-islands, at the magical hour when the burst of his innermost glory they feel. In welcoming cheer, in musical hollo, let Naiads, let Oreads, let Dryads unite: All-hail, O Apollo! O Apollo! O Apollo! God, newborn, of the risen sun's light.

Litany of the Muses

FINALE

Of music, of dance and of song

we Three be

mystical Muses

To our Lord and sire we belong

and the Soul that for His he chooses.

But O best-belovèd, brother

of Melpomenos, noble Apollo,

we pray that he bid us none other but Thee of all deities follow.

For thou art oracular shower true fore-knower:

of things as they be, calm seer,—
fear-freer;

of the heart's revengeful ire

purifier;

when Thou bendest thy golden bow—woe! woe!—

the white bone it will pierce with its arrow to the marrow!

For, O Pythian hater of disguise, craven lies:

who lovest the frank and the fair that will dare

look Thee, pure God, in the eye—yea, die

but not merit his own soul's scorn;-

Thou hast sworn:— who cowardly hatreds cherish

shall perish;

to back-biters and knaves Thou wilt send sore end;

but the old,—kind death shall obtain without pain

of Thee, who men's piteous ills canst feel, and with death, or new life thy suppliant heal! The three Muses petition Apollo and their sire, surnamed Melpomenos, that they be never required to follow other deities than them twain. So, we Muses of dance, of music, of song, to Thee, noble Phoibos Apollo, and Melpomenos, only, our father, belong and no stranger Gods ever will follow!

RIVALS DIVINE

I.

The company divideth, one side preferring Aphrodite to the left of Persephone, and the other side, to the right of Dionysos, particular votaries of Apollo.

As their praise of the Loxian the Muses three, ended in joy of faith, not without awe or wondering love,-the host of worshippers, subdued by the singing, divided in twain ranging about the emanative splendors, (seen first in ardors intense of devotion,) a crescent to right of the God Melpomenos:-his Muses white-clad, his Hill-nymphs diaphanous-shrouded, his green-garmented Dryads of trees, and the terrible Pans, the jeering Saturs, awaiting his nod to renew their clamor. Likewise a crescent to left of the fair Persephone:-the Charities three in snows of nudity chaste, the Naiads light-footed with eyes asparkle, the Maenads scarce held from resuming the dance orgyastic, (thyrsus in air and locks loose-tumbled, dappled faun-hides ill-cloaking shoulders wine-stain'd and voluptuous rosy-tipp'd breasts,) by the stilling look of the bride of their God. From the instant's hush unendurable, loud for sheer bliss cried a Naiad: "Hail Aphrodite!" and answering an Oread

shrill'd out: "Apollo!" Then each, interrupting the other's flow of rapturous song, alternate pursued the praise of her chosen deity, with reasoning melodious as rival birds of the new-leav'd bush:—

II.

Love ye the Goddess of gracious full being?

Know ye the God of delighted clear seeing? turns, and, effectually merging their

She, of the tyrannous affinity fast knitting wholes of the several parts?

A Naiad and an Oread sing by turns, and, effectually merging their rival hymns, illustrate the fitness of the deities for a spiritual union.

He, stern sundering divinity who searcheth things to their secret hearts?

Behold, it is She refineth to surfaces smooth all substance material for the ray of the sun to illumine and warm—

Behold, it is He who shineth and maketh alive and light and ethereal things coarse, dead, heavy, with spiritual form—

Yea, of Her is the splendor caught to the gladsome eye refracted; beauteous form made real for the human hand's persistent soft, insatiate caress!

> By Him, from chaos and nought things order'd, shap'd, compacted, mirror the soul's ideal, and are nigh'r to man when distant subtiliz'd to loveliness!

Her function to set the senses ashiver, (when heart is sick, and spirit is blind,) an immediate assurance procuring of the wealth and the worth of the world—

His office the heart from sense to deliver; He rouseth the quick, inquisitive mind with a mystery ever alluring in the inmost folds of it furl'd!

Who but She can save the mind from idle self-beholding? for Hers is the beauty of ebb and of flow in the manifold tides external:

Whose the praise if men divin'd the world's gradual unfolding? in changes and chances, the shine and the show, what is sure and abides eternal?

Aphrodite, thine alone the flower of living and breathing flesh!

O Apollo, sun-extracted, thine its perfume dewily fresh!

Through Thee feeling and loving—and art to bid death defiance!

Through Thee seeing and knowing, and man's life-mastering science.

VOTIVE GIFTS

I.

Then gratulant outspake, benign, the Mother: "Not twain are our labors, nor match'd shall they be merely, as thou hast foretold, but mated, rather; for which without either hath life? Well, meseems, and wisely thy maidens have sung their mutual need. Yet, in days of virtue Hellenic, long-past (the former vouth of the Gods) discontent drove them abroad over earth; for not in Olympos found they the sweets sufficient of fellowship utter as yours, my children! Though whence this foreboding gladsome, beyond pious doubt, I know not; but hark! at the break of the day of their earliest meeting, the Maid, scarce aware of her deity's dawn, with the Youth (Him of sight, Him of mind, in Her fully shown to himself-Her of touch, Her of heart) shall in wedlock be joined. And who if not ye, their love with pledge of progression shall cheer, with votive gifts from lovers expert to lovers still in the best of their joy uninitiate,-that day of supreme expectancy, prime of united lives?"

Demeter fortelleth the marriage of beauty and truth, art and science (Aphrodite and Apollo).

II.

"What boon,"
Persephone, blushing,
replied, "shall we dole unto Gods,
lovers? The Charities three

Persephone promiseth wedding gifts—and Dionysos is seized with the prophetic fury;

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of beautiful giving, and taking, and using, gladly I grant to the Bride, shall she visit Eleusis, the eve of her happy espousals; and surely, Dionysos Melpomenos, Lord of rhythm and phrenzy poetic, will on the Bridegroom, his dearly lov'd brother, bestow the mystic Muses of dance, music, song." The God's smile her words affirming,-behold the gaze abstract of his eyes took aureate lustre from worlds mist-molten, remote, (whose life with passionate dream prenatal, throbbeth in fire-seed;) and straightway his lips parting,-one shudder thrill'd, beatific, the worshipping host entire, (by fury predictive attain'd,) that each in his own soul only the words of the nuptial prophecy caught.

III.

whereupon he uttereth a marriage blessing upon the twain, proclaiming their joys of love and triumphs of their progeny.

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Aphrodite, Eucharis, full of grace, full of charm, with thy Charities three, from whose hands are fair living, and loving; Apollo, Musagetes, leader frank of 'the sisters three, who translate man from earth-struggle to care-free altitudes human; the time of your blessèd return impatient the world expecteth for aeons of righteous peace without end. And lo! it prepareth for you the privacy bridal, the couch creative of infinite rapture divine; that fatefully, fearfully drawn must ye be to bowers where droop hot roses their crimson heads close, face by face; and about them hills

rise, as in icy array defensive, whose tall lilies in winds of unconscious desire, ring out their laughter-peals fragrant. And thither, O thither the mystical will of the life self-perpetuate shall tyrannous urge ye, sweet love-maddened lovers; there, mouth to mouth, ye shall know not self from the lov'd one apart; and the lilies moon-silvery erst, are sun-fulvid with pollen-stain rich; and the roses, burst open, storm crimson petals,awhirl as they fall, in sign that the flesh, with voluptuous reluctance at last, panting, admitteth the mind's penetrant stern resolve. Such shall the anguishful gendering of Gods be, for jocund birth instantaneous. Rejoice, rejoice, O ye who the ancient Olympos rul'd, that, more absolute these-more adorably fair than of yore yourselves,-shall effortless fell the Titans, your foes rearisen; and aloft the summit sublime of the sacred mount, rear homes eternal, whence their sway shall extend all-potent forever o'er a nobler, a larger mankind!

HYMNS HYMENEAL

I. General Chorus

All praise Dionysos, Demeter, Persephone, to your united divinity! Your glories suffice usblossom, fruit, life-seed,-great Eleusynian trinity. to more recent We laud you forever that hospitable ye are in your gracious affinity; devising new pieties that tighten,

The gods of Eleusis are praisea for the sincere welcome they extend claimants of worship by Maenads, Satyrs, Pans, Nymphs, Charities, Muses.

not sever, th' old bonds of devotion; (the streams of our worship not lost in the ocean the dead-sea of a jealousy bitter and dumb, our longings not drown'd in a lonely infinity,) we exalt you for hailing unbegotten societies of Gods that shall brighten the ages to come.

II. The Muses

The Muses set forth the necessity of polytheism.

For the Gods are many and various: the good things that men love and desire. The life of the world were precarious if it burn'd not with manifold fire. Men's ideals,- flame-gods, aspirations, rare excellences, heroisms sublime,be innumerable as races and nations. as moods of man, moments of time. But the heights know each other, saluting athwart the vast plains of low land: (the worship of each not confuting the worship of all,) hand in hand the glorious mountains enring us old earth of the animal strife; and together, one in spirit, they sing us the pæan of man's divine life.

III. The Charities

HYMN TO EROS

The Charities burst into a hymn unto the ancient Eros, God of love, ever young, ever wise, ever glorious, God of gods.

Yet who shall renew man's universe? restore to it a splendor pristine? in the bath of cleansing fire immerse? give more and ever more to it of the passionate heat suns kissed in

ere cool'd by the impious curse? of the pride in spiritual might ere fell on man's bloom a blight, and the better was deem'd the worse? O Eros, sole god-head primeval, invisible witness thou wast of the continents' upheaval, from the warm love-languorous sea: and again, the whelming urgence of waters that boil'd and toss'd o'er the slow voluptuous submergence of the lands-from whom but from Thee? Thou-atom to atom alliest, commingling the alien and strange, dissevering the likest and nighest, allowing no ultimate rest; and marshall'd from chaos dismal, undergoing mystical change, the molecules stellar and prismal crystals compose at thy hest. Thou givest flow'rs color and fragrance, and honey, that, pollen-shower'd, unawares the air's sunny vagrants to perform thy sweet tasks be empower'd. Thou givest, many-hued iridescent plumes to the birds; yea, throats to trill, warble, pipe, whistle, incessant subdued or triumphant rich notes. Of Thee, in thy season, all creatures have special terror and grace; softening man's fiercer features, flushing maid's meekest face. Of Thee, all friendships, heart-duties, devotions to social good, all ardent faiths, luminous beauties, pure manhood, strong womanhood. Far to near, and upper to nether, lest they cease from being divine,

th' very Gods thou knittest together, and their glory and honor is thine.

O Eros, the new ages shall feel Thee binding earth and heaven so close that lowliest souls shall reveal Thee th' High God in the common and gross!

IV. The Nymphs

The Nymphs laud the divine issue of wedded Apollo and Aphrodite, predicting the condescension of the goddesses to human lovers. The God of daylight, the Goddess of form aglow O ancient Eros, 'tis Thou shalt affiance: and glorious the race of new Gods that shall owe their being to wedded Art and Science. They shall dwell not idle in sky-courts remote high-wall'd on perpetual blue above cloud: nor shall incense that men to their honor devote make them careless, cruel, ignobly proud; no heav'ns shall they promise their worshippers which never the living can hope to enter; nor teach scorn of Earth, and all that is hers, on themselves men's devotions to center. They shall live on the heights, but heights terrestrial of difficult-yet possible-ascent; master, not slay, in man what is bestial, to subserve the divine intent. Nor icily chaste, without radiant issue, shall the Goddesses, wondrously beautiful, in crystal houses 'neath spreads of gold-tissue, dream, languorous, on couches of cloudy wool. For the haughtiest hath—an Endymion, an Adonis, and wotteth some trysting-spot hallowed and dear, where she with him and her love alone is in wood or glade, by fountain or mere. Because, never ideals can wed one another though chosen manly spirits they may blessedly love; but twice blessed the mother of a hero who extendeth o'er earth her sway; and thrice blessed the hero, the half-divine who in his-reflecteth his mother's face, whose gentleness, purity, sweetness refine and ennoble, in living and dying, his race!

O the Gods of masculine might, the splendors eternally fated, in vain with man would fight; not so could they wrest of him the truest, the best of him: for their cruel perfection hated. But, as Semele granted her beauty entire to Zeus the wielder of heavenly fire: as Danae yielded (when a storm-shower of gold fell through green boughs of hope) in the passionate fold of his arms, to his fierce desire; as once Ariadne, the woe-begone, tearful awoke in the blushful dawn to wed the wine-rapturous God of the bold; as Clymene fair of hair bowed dim in a flare of air radiant and hot from her sunbright Apollo; so the maidens of earth shall in ages to come be wooed of the gods in terrestrial disguise; and whithersoever they flee, will follow Love with lustrous, worshipful eyes. Of ideals joy-begotten and born of earth-agony, womanhood grander shall visit mankind, courageous, strong, swift of foot, unable to flag on a skyward ascent of spirit and mind; beautiful, pure of soul, feminine evermoresisterly, motherly, wifely sweet:might of brain, grace of heart, time shall not sever more married in womanhood final, complete.

The Maenads shout jubilantly and extol the wisdom and justice shown in the mating of their godly sons to maids of earth.

INTERLUDE

Satyrs— O Pans, fierce Pans, they have prophesied Saty the death of your savage day!

Pans— O Satyrs, Satyrs, they lied, they lied—

t'is ye who must first give way!

Satyrs— Nay, Apollo will slay the human beast, and man no more on man shall feast!

Satyrs, Pans, and Maenads are doomed not to perish, but to endure a beneficent transformation. Pans— Aphrodite will conquer with a smile your drunken lusts, and your laughters vile.

Maenads—O Satyr, O Pan, why quarrel for naught?

Not perish shall Ye, but a change endure:—
Satyr to laughter joyously pure,
Pan to a terrible courage of thought.
So shall ye serve man loyally both;
while, soothing the wilder in us and the rougher,
we Bacchic maidens as surely must suffer
the ache, and the bliss of a spiritual growth.
But in all that man thinketh, and feeleth, and
willeth.

and in all that he doeth, shall he own our control; an enthusiasm, oblivious of self, that fulfilleth, with a holy confidence, body and soul.

THE BANQUET OF THE GODS

I.

1. The Naiads

The water-nymphs see Aphrodite enthroned with Apollo in New Olympos. Aphrodite Eucharis—
'tis She,
in robe of dazzling dews
(see, see!)
throning aloft
pure, gentle, soft!
The locks—of Apollo beside her—diffuse
halo of sunny bliss,
glory of many hues!

2. The Dryads

Tree-nymphs describe the forestshaded road that leadeth up the holy mount, Tell us! what shining street winds up Olympos sheer? not surely for happy human feet? Can men and matrons, youths and maids breathe air so pure? a lustre endure that fails not, nor fades? feel of the Gods no stifling fear?

3. The Oreads

O happier, devouter race! yours no penance, pleadings humiliant, hero-sorrows vicarious, and sore intercedings; but footstep resilient and life-glad face, as ye come with jubilant cry in labyrinthine-various processional dance, each, boldly to occupy a rightful place in the festal hall:—

Hill-nymphs tell of human processions ascending with ease and jubilation

4. Chorus of Nymphs

Ice-shiny floor, cloud marble wall and roofing expanse of sky over all! Together the Nymphs shout for joy at the splendor and vastness of the divine house.

II.

1. The Charities

Then at the board shall guest with host, Man with God sit down; flowers spring forth that each loves most, each crown'd with an odorous crown; of pearl opalescent the massy dishes are pil'd with all fruits that grow; greetings of love, and pious wishes set every face aglow! Whereupon the Charities praise the banquet at which Demeter dealeth out her broken bread of sorrow, feeding the soul to holy strength;

Then, lo! Thou, Demeter, shalt solemnly, slowly, for Gods alike and for Men, break bread most holy-(than all meat sweeterthe loaf of grief and bereavement ground, kneaded, parch'd with fire,) that strengtheneth to great achievement, and maketh the fed aspire!

2. The Muses

for all the blood wine of heroic self-immolation rendereth divine.

and the Muses add . Dionysos, then, to their broken bread, thereto, that Dio- Thou wilt pour nysospoureth forth more and more in crystalline bowls iridescent. that inspireth and the juices fire-red of grape-clusters bruis'd, sweet-scented with virtuous herbs aromatic:the hero-blood that from death-wounds ooz'd as the slayers too late repented. O Wine by worship of grateful souls fermented: O Wine effervescent with the final bliss of self-sacrifice ecstatic; O intoxicant Wine without price from life's death-vat divine,beget in each drinker, the lover's rapture Elysian, the poet's fury, the prophet's vision, the serene world-sight of the thinker!

3. General chorus

Praise, praise everlasting to Thee, O Demeter to Thee, Dionysos, Thee daughter and bride Persephone,—holy Gods of Eleusis:— Thou who feedest the fasting to nourish the spiritual life of the eater, thy food sanctifying for worthiest uses; Thou who quenchest the thirst for the best in the worst, till at length their desires be satisfied; Thou who bindest with love the Twain in One:-As on earth so in heaven ye see it is: all thanks be due, and all honor is done to them who chose pain, not pleasure; great-hearted service, not griping sway; who their might superhuman to measure build up, give life,-not demolish and slay! Wherefore, O noble Eleusynian deities we vow perpetual worship to you: wherefore thro' the ages for ever and aye, though new names ye receive again and again,

no Gods more than You will we serve and believe, sung of children, lov'd of women, hallow'd of men!

The Maenads, Satyrs, Pans, Nymphs, Charities, Muses, all together, exult in the greatness of the Eleusynian three, assuring them perpetuity of worship and the tender regard of men to the last age of the world.

THE AFTERSONG

I.

The final chorus hath caused the poet to fall into an ecstasy;

From the confluent torrents of praise delirious waxed the dithyramb's worshipful fury: a vortex of rapture symphonious, fast-swirling, spray-bursts of clamor irrepressible, gurgling eddies in eddies of laughter, along on its surface of melody; breaking its uttermost edge to cestatic surf 'gainst hill-shores reverberant, its own violence engulfing in the abysmal deep of itself.

II.

so that he hath a vision of the city, erst foul and dark, made pure and full of light;

Rapt to vertiginous pitch above seeing and hearing, my soul soar'd immobile in hush and void; till again life-aware, no vision deific disturb'd her incurious content. Below stood fleckless my city, ethereal, clear; relucent with quivering wet from the holy wash of the rain; gables, chimneys, towers, pinnacles, spires, to crystal transmuted, clove eager the vitreous, light-vibrant air; sparkl'd, gleam'd, flicker'd, flar'd, flash'd in the downpour of sunshine, whence swollen the fulgurant gold river flowed large to vanish behind proud heights whereon lean'd the verge of the sky.

Then, a swift assurance of my mind took unreasoning possession. Before me was the foretold wonder in symbol fulfill'd: coarse stuff of earth, deem'd hitherto foul, now illustrious with spiritual ardor; quick beams into wastes of dark nothing hurl'd uselessly forth, fix'd now in substantial splendor for man. And, as Demeter, ancient mother of sorrow, as Dionysos with blood-spotted garment, the bridegroom, undaunted of death, (in mystical fellowship held at Eleusis by love for the daughter, the bride Persephone,) hail'd Apollo, Aphrodite hail'd, (in the myth of my dreaming,) their beneficent sway to divide o'er the fortunes of man: So, Life with studied iniquity dealing her doom of anguish selective, that the many thereby become few or barren, while the few mother many in their forfeited room at ease; So, Life inspiring his chosen the impossible to dare, with folly of will, that the few thus perish, and live in the marvel of the many a multiplied life of lives; So, the world's dire powers propulsive (at one in their passion alone for unfolding might and grace). Evolution!-Revolution!-

and straightway he comprehendeth the meaning of the entire vision.

invite
to a share in their secular
toil, makers of man than they
less cruel; for, with vital doctrine Science,
enamor'd, impregnateth Art, who in joy
bringeth deathless ideals to the day,
nobler, more vigorous, lords of a higher
heaven, earth-transfigurers, begetters brave,
yea, and beautiful bearers of men
in their likeness,
after their kind.

IV.

But his wonder waxeth greater when the city changeth to a vost theatre,

Comforted gazed I, though tears of gratitude dimm'd my sight. For the city on a sudden became a sun-dazzling arena immense; and her girdle of hills with their shelving streets (huge benches, tier over tier for intent spectators,) swept amphitheatre-wise about; and the river a choric procession, white-vested, an altar large encircl'd solemn and slow with song; but beyond and above them, larger, arose the altar heroic for human oblation of bravery, rectitude, slain of their slayers but to triumph in Them. o'er the wisdom of scarring experience, at last, as faiths inborn, and instinctive smiles!

V.

and forthwith expandeth to his country—as the stage for the final

Bewilder'd, I star'd (though passionate tears continued to blind me,) far athwart sky-reaches

display to the world of the God in man.

diaphanous, without end; the elusive horizon receding apace, till man's arena of achievement outspread to the length, in my view, and the breadth of the land best-beloved, by a monstrous half-ring environ'd, of eternal main-lands sea-welded together (the shine of vast strands with shine of wide waters blent,)-Europe and Africa east, and to southward America; Australia with Asia in the west :the terrestrial amphitheatre's round, where the nations throng agape, young and old, at the spectacle new, the last act of hell,-heaven's first: the deification of Man!

VI.

Then close my eyes shut, by the portent dismayed, lest the former despair had bestowed no miraculous gift of far sight prophetic, but mock'd me instead with hallucinations: "Too good, too beautiful," cried I aloud, "for wildest belief!" But gently my panic allayed to a calm certitude strange of great joy. Soft at my Soul's car Hope whisper'd: "Too good, too beautiful not to be true,-yea, and soon true for Thee, true for Me somehow, somewhere, sometime!" Though the storm of scership still'd, I linger'd screne on the sheer height awhile of Culture

The poet, bewildered and amazed, dareth not disbelieve the truth of the vision; wherefore he declareth it to his fellowmen, that they may decide whether it sholl be proven true or false;-for in present deeds make they the fate beautiful or hideous of all time to be.

Hellenic, at peace with my bliss and smiled; for I caught myself unawares murmuring (some burden of a hymn in sweet dreams heard,)
"Surely it should be, wherefore it shall be, it must be, it is—as I saw it and see it again, and in vision have shown it to thee!"

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

LEOPARDI AND GOETHE

LA GINESTRA

On the arid shoulder here of the formidable mount Vesuvius, fierce destroyer, which else of neither tree is cheered, nor flower, Thou scatterest thy solitary shrubs, sweet-smelling Broom, content with wildernesses. Thee I saw with thy sprays gracing also the waste lands which girdle the city round that once of man was queen, and with their staid appearance taciturn to the passerby seemed to bear witness and make memorial of her empire lost. Now once again, lover of sorrowful sites forsaken, of broken fortunes, comrade true, I view Thee on this soil. These fields with ashes unproductive strewn, mantled with indurate lava, under the wanderer's footsteps resonant, where finds the snake his nest and writhes in the sun, and where returns the rabbit to his wonted hollow lair .blithe rural homes once were, ploughed ground golden with wheat ears, loud with lowing of herds: gardens and palaces for the great a refuge pleasurable of idle ease; there cities far-famed once stood which the fierce mount

with fiery torrents from his fulminant mouth along with their indwellers whelmed. One common desolation all enfolds where thou, O gracious Flower, dost stand, and sendest, as though of others' ruin piteous, to heaven incense of most sweet fragrancy the waste wild comforting. These scenes let him visit whose use 't is to extol our lot with praise; let him take note for our race how solicitous fond Nature is; and the vast might here with equitable measure can he mete of that humanity, which, with slight stir when danger least is feared, a heartless foster-mother in part extirpates, and with some motion little less light is able utterly to annihilate. In these realms stand depicted of our human generations the magnificent progressive destinies!

Look hither! here glass thyself, arrogant, fatuous Age, that didst the path forsake - till then by thought reanimate beckoned onand tracing back thy steps dost boast of thy retreat proclaiming it advance! To thy child's play all gifted souls whose hostile fate made Thee their parent, tribute of worship pay, tho' at times, among themselves they make of thee their jest. Not I shall go down to my grave thus shamed! A light task 'twere for me after the rest to pattern, and, raving in manner set, make to thine ear my song acceptable. But I choose rather that the full disdain which in my heart is pent

have utterance as open as may be. Albeit most well I know whoever to his own age proves o'ermuch distasteful, soon is quenched by dull oblivion! Of which curse that I must share with Thee. till now have I made merry. Thou dreamest of freedom still and wouldst at the self-same time have Thought be slave again:to which alone 'tis due if we have risen partly from savagery, with whose sole aid our culture waxes, which conducts alone our public fortunes forth to better things. Thus did the truth displease thee, which the bitter lot taught, and the station low assigned to us by Nature; for this cause basely didst turn thy back on the light that made it clear; and thou-a runagatecallest him base, who doth pursue the light; - and only him great-souled who, flouting himself, or others,-fool or knave,above the stars our mortal rank exalts!

A man that's destitute, with limbs infirm,—but lofty soul well-born,— nor vaunts, nor fancies himself in gold rich, or robust; to opulent living 'mong the throng and valorous person, makes no farcical pretense; but lets, without false shame appear his lack of strength and wealth; in open speech of them makes mention, and of his state with truth accordant shapes his estimate. A foolish creature,— not magnanimous,—do I deem him, who, born to perish and in suffering reared,

should say "for pleasure was I framed," and with offensive arrogance fill volumes: loftiest destinies and novel felicitieswhereof not our planet alone but the whole heavens know nought,pledging to a Race whom a wave of storm-stirred sea, a breath of air malignant, a subterranean shock, so utterly destroys that with great difficulty their memory persists. A noble nature hath who dares to lift against the common doom his mortal eye, and with frank phrases,- nought from the truth deducting - the ills that make our fate acknowledges, and our low station frail; Who shows himself great, valiant in suffering; nor augments with fratricidal hates and wraths (than other ills more grievous) his distress; Nor holds man answerable for what he suffers, but assigns to her the blame; who is indeed guilty: - as to birth Mother, but in heart, Step-mother of mankind! Her he calls Foe; and, thinking (as is most true) human society originally in martial order drawn Her to oppose,-confederate he esteems all men, encircling them with love sincere; offering, and looking for returns of potent and prompt aid in alternate perils, in the pains of common warfare. His right hand to arm against offending fellow-man, to fetter his neighbor, or in his path set hindrances, folly he deems: as 'twould be in a camp

besieged by hostile armies, when the assault is at the hottest, forgetful of the foe, to start a bitter feud among one's friends; to let the sword flash bare, flight-spreading, among one's brothers in arms! Thoughts such as these when they have grown (as once they were) familiar to the masses; when the fear, that first in social ties knit men, by veritable science is in part brought back; then honorable and noble citizen-intercourse, equity and sweet mercy, another root will have obtained than fables insolent, founded whereon the popular probity is wont to stand erect as safe as can aught that hath propped itself up on a lie.

Ofttimes o'er these ravaged tracts which the congealed flood cloaks somberly swelling as tho' in billows it would roll, I sit me down at night and watch the stars, out of the blue of purity absolute on high, dart on the melancholy heath their fires, (which afar off the smooth sea mirroreth); and all about, o'er the whole heaven, the Universe with sparkles scintillate. And when my eyes I raise to fix those lights that to their view show as mere dots, yet are so vast that measured by them earth and sea are but a dot indeed; to which not merely man, but this world-globe whereon Man is as naught, Is utterly unknown; and when I gaze upon those knots of clustering stars beyond all measure more remote, that unto us as mists appear, by which not Man, nor the mere earth, but all -

(for number infinite and for mass our golden sun included) all the stars we see are unsuspected, or appear to them, as they to earth: a point of nebulous brilliancy; - what then seemest thou to my mind, O Child of man? Remembering, in turn, thy state below, well set forth by the soil I tread: how nevertheless Thou dost believe thyself Lord, and appointed End for all that is! How often Thou wast pleased to feign upon this obscure grain of sand minute called Earth, because of thee the Framers of the Universe descended frequent converse pleasurable to hold with some of thine; - and how, renewing such fatuous dreams, insulted are the wise even by this present Age which seems for knowledge to outtop and civil manners all times hitherto what feeling then, unhappy mortal race, what thought of Thee at last my heart assails? I know not if contempt, or pity 'tis, prevails?

As from a tree drops a dwarf apple down which toward the Autumn's close no other power but its own ripeness flings to earth; and, in its fall, the precious homes of some ant-people, tunneled in soft turf at cost of infinite toil, it crushes, unpeoples; and the labors, and the ample store assiduously collected by that folk, with provident strain, prolonged throughout the summer season, in one instant buries;—so from the thunderous womb hurled to the heavens profound a night and ruin—compact of ashes, cinders, rocks, with seething streams dilute—that fell as a leaden hail;—

41.75

Or, a vast flood of boulders, liquefied metals, and molten sand hissing adown the mountain's grassy flanks,wasted, destroyed, and whelmed in a few seconds, the cities which the sea bathed on her farther shore: and here now over them goats browse, while cities new rise on the other side, for which the buried make foundations firm; and the steep mount spurns with its trampling foot the prostrate walls. Nature nor venerates, nor hath in care Man more than ant; and, if more rare be the slaughter of man than ant unto no other cause 'tis due but that less numerous is man's progeny!

Full eighteen centuries have sped since, by fire's violence oppressed, vanished those populous seats; but still the humble peasant who his vineyard tends, who in these fields with difficulty by the dead and cindered soil is fed,lifts a suspicious eye up to the fatal peak, which no whit tamed, yet sits terrific, threatens yet ruin to him, his sons and their scant patrimony. Oftentimes the wretch upon the roof of his rustic cot, the whole night long will lie sleepless in the wandering airs; and leap up more than once the course of the dread seething mass to explore that pours adown the sandy back forth from the exhaustless hollow gorge, with whose reflected glow gleams the sea beach of Capri, Naples' port, and Mergellina. Should he see it draw nigh, or in the depths of his own well hear the water gurgle hot -

his sons he rouses, in all haste his wife, and fleeing with whatever they can snatch of their poor property, they watch from afar their wonted dwelling, and the little field, (their sole defense from famine,) fall a prey to the prowling flood inexorable, that crackles as it reaches them, and spreads stiffening forever over all. To the rays of heaven is restored after agelong oblivion, dead Pompeii, like an interrèd skeleton by piety or greed exhumed; and, from the desolate forum, standing among the files of columns truncated, the traveler a long while contemplates that Mount with its twin peaks, the smoking crest that still threatens the scattered ruins. And, in the horror of night's secrecy, over the vacant amphitheatres and toppled temples and the houses wrecked, where hides the bat her young,like to a dismal torch that circles ominously through empty palaces, the dazzling glare of the funereal lava flies, lurid in the glooms afar, and tinges all the landscape round. So, ignorant of Man, of the stretch of times he ancient deems, of the substitution regular of child for sire,-Nature alone stands still in youth, or moves along a road of so great sweep that motionless she seems. Meanwhile, fall kingdoms, peoples pass, and tongues whereof no notes she takes but MAN, dares arrogate the glory, for himself, of endless days!

And Thou, slow-flowering Broom that with thy perfumed sprays adornest these marred lands, Thou, too, soon must succumb to the subterranean fires. which visiting once again places familiar grown, will spread out their consuming skirts over thy gentle shrubs: and thou wilt bow thine innocent head, not vainly stubborn under the load of death; yet not ere then, shall it be bent in futile supplication cowardly unto thy future slayer; neither self-lifted with insane pride, unto the stars; nor above the waste - where not thy choice, but fate decreed thee birth and dwelling place; yet, wiser, yea so much less weak, than Man in that Thou'st not believed thy feeble kind rendered by fate, or thee imperishable!

NATURE AND ART

(Natur und Kunst)

EPILOGUE TO SONNETS

Nature and Art still shun each other's sight, yet mate as fellows, ere one wotteth well. My stubborn mood hath long since left me quite; so, which most draweth me I scarce may tell.

There needs must be a strait and true endeavor; but, the full dole once paid of life we owe, bound mind and will as thralls of Art forever, fiercely at heart as erst may Nature glow!

Like token marketh every high emprise. All spirits undisciplined strove in vain to stand where heights of pure perfection reach the skies. Who great things would, shall hold his soul in hand. Only self-mastered may man master be, and law fulfilled alone can speak us free!

BALANCE

(From the Metamorphose der Thiere)

Nevertheless within, the might of the worthier creatures findeth itself inclosed in a round of living formation: borders no God may enlarge, and which Nature revereth. For, thus limited, only was possible ever the perfect.

May this noble conception of might and restraint, and of self-will

and law, and of freedom and bounds, and of order in motion, lack and advantage,—rejoice thee; for hearken, the holy Muse doth teach it thee thus with gentle insistence.

Higher conception no ethical thinker attaineth; none the man of affairs, at his craft no fashioning artist.

Rulers thence, worthy of rule, the pleasure draw of their sceptre!

Highest Creation of Nature, rejoice that thou feelest thee able thinking, her loftiest thought to o'ertake, whereto in creating She herself upsoared; there plant thee, and thence let thy glances

backward sweep, make proof, and compare, and take from the Muse's

mouth (that thou see, nor be drunken) this full truth, certain and gracious!

A HUMAN FEELING

(Menschengefuhl)

Ah, ye gods, ye mighty gods in the wide heaven over us, would ye grant us here on earth stalwart mind and cheerful heart, gladly would we leave to you, O ye good, your heaven above!

EVEN SO

(Ein Gleiches)

Hovereth o'er every height —
Peace visible.
And every tree-top — light
breathings do lull
of dreamless sleep.
Birds hush them in the brake.
Bide thee, thou too ere long shalt take
thy rest — still, deep.

THE WAYFARER

(Der Wanderer)

Hail, and God bless thee, young Mother, and the little One the son at thy breast!

Let me drop at the rock-wall here in the elm-tree's shadow my burden down, and rest me beside thee.

Young Mother:

What craft can drive thee thro' the heat of the day thus up the dusty path hither? Bearest wares from the town through the country-side? Thou smilest, stranger, at this my question?

Wayfarer:

No wares from town have I brought. Cool now grows the evening. Bring me to the well-spring whereat thou drinkest, gracious new-wed wife!

Young Mother:

This way, up the rock-path. Go before me! It leadeth thro' the shrubberies thick unto the well-spring whereof I drink.

Wayfarer:

Tokens of ordering human hands betwixt the bushes appear. These stones be not of thy building, Prodigal-handed Nature!

Young Mother:

Up further, and on!

Wayfarer:

Lo, covered with moss, an architrave! I know thee fashioning Mind again — thy seal in th' hewn rock deep-set.

Young Mother:

Press onward, stranger!

Wayfarer:

Inscriptions whereon I trample—alas, illegible!
Away are ye flown
Deep-graven words,—
ye that to thousand generations
should your master's worship show.

Young Mother:

Starest thou, wondering at this stone, stranger? Farther up about my cot full many stones lie.

Wayfarer:

Yonder?

Young Mother:

Close at thy left, up thro' the thick bushes,—here!

Wayfarer:

Ye muses and graces!

Young Mother:

This is my cottage.

Wayfarer:

Ruins of a temple!

Young Mother:

Down the slope this way upwelleth the spring whereof I drink.

Wayfarer:

Aglow, still hoverest thou over thy grave-mound, Genius; albeit on thee hath crashed and crumbled thy master-work, undying spirit!

Young Mother:

Stay, the while I fetch the cup that thou mayest drink.

Wayfarer:

Ivy hath clothed about thy godlike structure tall! How ye yearn upward out of the wreckage, ye pillars twain, and thou, too, lonesome sister, how ye together — mournful moss on your hallowed heads,—in grief majestical look down beholding the prostrate pillars at your feet broken,—your kith and kin! Of the tangled bramble bushes shadowed, rubbish and earth half hide them; and the gaunt grass stalks over them!

Young Mother:

How he sleeps, my baby boy! Wilt rest thee, stranger, in our cottage? Or wouldest rather here in the open tarry? Cool it is. Take thou the boy the while I fetch thee water. Sleep, my darling, sleep!

Wayfarer:

Sweet is thy rest! On heavenly seas of health afloat, tranquil he breathes! Thou, born among the remnants of a holy, long-gone past, may its spirit breathe on thee! For whom it halloweth, he, as the gods in self-knowledge, shall thrill with a gladness of day after day. Unfold, thou swelling bud, loveliest gem, adorning white-shimmery spring, outshine thy fellows: then may the full fruit rise out of thy bosom and ripen to sunward!

Young Mother:

God bless him! Still he sleepeth? Naught have I more than homely bread to offer thee, with the cool spring-water.

Wayfarer:

My heartfelt thank. How all about doth put forth bloom and leaf! What verdure!

Young Mother:

Soon from the field my husband home will come. O, stay friend, stay, And share with us the evening meal.

Wayfarer:

And here - ye dwell?

Young Mother:

Yonder among the toppled walls my father lived to build the cottage of tiles, and of the ruin's stones. Here do we dwell.

To a husbandman he gave me, and breathed his last soon in our arms

Hast slept thy fill, sweetheart?

How merry, see, and fond of play, wee rogue!

Wayfarer:

Nature, forever budding, each hast fashioned to the joy of life, purveying, as mother true, to every child a home for heritage. High-buildeth the swallow under the eaves, unwitting what chiselled grace she bedaubs;— above the golden bough, her brood's winter-abode, the cankerworm spinneth; and thou, 'mid ruins august of the long-gone past, O man, for thy bare needs buildest thy patchwork cot;— and hast over graves—thy joy! . . . Farewell, thou happy wife!

Young Mother:

Thou wilt not tarry?

Wayfarer:

God keep you twain, and bless your boy.

Young Mother:

God speed thee.

Wayfarer:

Whither o'er yonder hill will the path take me?

Young Mother:

To Cuma.

Wayfarer:

And how far thither?

Young Mother:

Three miles or more.

Wayfarer:

Farewell. Oh, lead my steps Nature,- the stranger's wayfaring foot which o'er the graves of a hallowed long-gone age wendeth carefree,to a place of safety from northwinds sheltered, by a poplar-copse from the noon-sun screened .-And, when homeward I turn at eventide to my hut in the last ray golden may such a wife there bid me welcome, Our infant son in her arms!

CHANT OF THE SPIRITS OVER THE WATERS

(Gesang der Geister ueber den Wassern)

The soul of Man is like unto water: From heaven it falleth, to heaven ariseth, and thence to earthward in endless round again returneth!

When from sheer crag quick-gusheth the flashing stream, it breaketh in shimmer and glister, and flitteth to the smooth sheen rocks below; whence softly updrawn, as a mist-veil forth-fluttereth, its mysteries lisping and whispering adown the still deep.

If rough boulders upfling them its onrush to stem, lo, it frotheth and roareth from ledge to ledge weltering to the bottomless pit; thro' level green valleys it dallyeth wistfully—and the stars do number in wide pools unwrinkled their twinkling array.

The wind is the lusty Lover of waters, who the foam-crested billows upstirreth and mingleth.

O, Life of Man's soul, how like unto water! O, Weird of Man's life, how like unto wind!

HUMAN LIMITATIONS

(Die Grenzen der Menschheit)

When far-scattereth the Ancient of days and most holy Allfather freehanded from billowing cloud-rack the seeds over earth of beneficent lightning —

I kiss me his vesture's uttermost border, the little child's reverent fear in my heart.

For let not the mightiest mete him as fellow with beings divine.
Aloft doth man hurl him with proud front to smite the heavens — and lo, helpless his foot findeth nowhere safe stead, while the welkin and wind with him play.

Or, with stout thew astrain, if he rear him up, stalwart, on the fast-founded earth everlasting,—behold, tho' haughty of stature, shall to-skyward his reach be with the gnarled oak's likened, or the clambering vine's?

What sundereth mankind from the Gods thus forever? Innumerous the waves fare on and on following—a flow inexhaustible before them; while us—one surge lifteth and swalloweth, that we sink into naught.

A petty round, close engirdleth our life; and the frequent generations outstretch link in link. the chain never-ending of human existence!

THE DIVINE

(Das Göttliche)

High-hearted be Man, kindly and good. seeing thereby only preferred is He before all beings to mortals known.

Hail the loftier Unknown Beings whom in awe we forefeel! Let man be after their likeness; in them his ensample, teach trust and belief!

For, without feeling is Nature; on wicked and good forth-shineth the sun; ay, the mean alike and the worthiest behold the still beauty of moon and of stars.

Whirlwind and flood thunder and hail-storm roar on their way, and, hurtling past them, whelm in destruction all in their turn.

Even so, blind-gropeth Luck 'mid the many; now catching the curls of the guileless youngling, and now the bald pate of the hoary in guilt. Girded of laws everduring, adamantine, vast,—all, all must draw to its close their round of existence.

Man only can bring to pass the impossible;— 'tis he who discerneth, who deemeth and doometh; and the vanishing moment by his grace may endure.

To Man only is granted boon for the worthy, bane for the wicked; he healeth, he saveth; the astray and wide-strown he atoneth in use.

And, immortals we worship as tho' human they were; wrought in the vast, what in the narrower room the worthiest doeth, or fain would do.

Be the high-hearted man, then both kindly and good! fashioning unwearied, the Useful, the Right; in truth so foreshadowing yon beings we divine!

MY GODDESS

(Meine Gottin)

To which of the deathless shall the highest praise be? I contend not with any, yet proffer my worship to the quick-varying ever-young and light-hearted wondrous daughter of Zeus, his darling child — Phantasy!

For unto her freely made he allotment of all moods and whimsies, else sacredly warded for Him alone; and greatly he taketh delight in the antics of his wayward wanton:—

Whether her listeth
with crown of red rosebuds
and white lily-sceptre
to trip it thro' valleys
abloom, and queen it
o'er summery songbirds
and butterflies, sipping
the sweet dew, beelike,
from the heart of the flowers;

Or whether her listeth, with loose locks streaming and look melancholy, in the winds to fling her over beatling crags; Or with hues myriad-glinting As the morn and the even with ever new aspect as the smiles of the moon, to reveal her to mortals.

Wherefore, laud and thank let us proffer the Ancient of Days, high-exalted, Father, who so lovely never-fading a consort hath accorded us, perishing Children of men!

For unto us only hath he lovingly plighted her with the troth-ring of heaven,—and straitly charged her in good days and evil as true-hearted helpmeet never to forsake us.

The other poor kindreds—
offspring of the Earth,
living Mother of lives,—
roam, raven and feed,
in the gross joys sordid,
and the dull brutish anguish
of the moment's cramped
mindless existence;
bowed low by the yoke
of want and of need!

Howbeit unto us, (O Joy!) — he hath granted his subtlest, much-fondled and daintiest daughter. Come, graciously meet her as best belovèd; entreat her to wield the sway of our household.

And beware lest step-dame Wisdom, unwittingly ruffle her sensitive tender child's spirit. Albeit, fellowship lief, with her elder soberer sister long have I cherished: Oh, may she not leave me ere the last ray of life; She, to high emprise urger, soul-consoler — kind Hope!

THE ONE AND THE ALL

(Eins und Alle)

I. SELF-SURRENDER

Ay, Self to find in the boundless Vast gladly the One were lost at last, all chafe and coil dissolved away; no heat of lust, wild will grim-set, irksome demand, stern duty's threat; self—yielded up, . . . what ecstasy!

II. ATONEMENT

Soul of the world, come thrill us through!
To wrest from the world-mind the True,
were chiefest use, then, of our strength.
Kind spirits beckon and proffer aid;
to Him who maketh all, and made,—
the foremost masters lead at length.

III. CREATION

To shape again the fashioned shape—
lest stiff, it rear and ramp agape,—
is wrought by th' onward Thrust of life.
What was not, now would come to birth
in clearbright sun, or motley earth,—
but never to rest from change and strife.

IV. EVOLUTION

Stir shall they, and press with fashioning strain, the self-framed shape, transformed amain; but somewhiles seem they stayed and still. The Abiding goeth forth in all: for the All to utter Nought must fall if held to being with stark self-will.

MY LEGACY

(Vermachtniss)

I. EXISTENCE

What is — to Nought can nowise fall.

The Abiding goeth forth in all.

Thy bliss in being then have and hold; for Being abideth ever; and laws thy living hoard shall keep, because the All decked him therewith of old.

II. REASON

Time out of mind, the Truth was found,—
and the high fellowship of souls close-bound.
Hold fast the eldest Truth, and thank
O, child of earth, for wisdom — One
who bade earth wing her 'round the sun,
hosting her brethren rank on rank.

III. CONSCIENCE

Now straightway to within thee turn. That midmost spot wilt thou discern no man of worth can dare gainsay. Hast lack there of no rule or 'hest: for love — self-gotten — of the best is sun unto thy duty's day.

IV. UNDERSTANDING

In th' body's wits put childlike faith; they cheat not ever with lie or wraith whom the quick mind shall ward from sleep. With keen glad eye go mark and learn; fare safe, howso thy path may turn, thro' a world of wealth far-strown and deep.

V. PRUDENCE

In plenty and weal, taste — and forbear, be Heed still bidden, and well aware when life of life hath cheer and glee; so shall the bygone day abide, and time forefeel the unborn tide, and the brief Now — forever be.

VI. WISDOM

And hast thou got thee skill herein throughly to feel, and surely ween; "What fruiteth well alone is true"—behold thou long the common sway — what dooms it deemeth on for aye — and fellow thee unto the few.

VII. VOCATION

And, as of yore alone and still some work love-born of their own will the men of lore and songcraft 'gat,—
Thou winnest gift most fair: to fashion high souls with thine own thought and passion!
What call or task shall better that?

ORACULAR WORDS IN ORPHIC MANNER

(Urworte, Orphisch)

ΔΑΙΜΩΝ: DÄMON

(The Genius, Individuality, Innate Character)

Yea, as the sun (what day thy life was leant the world) did stand each planet's sphere to greet—so throv'st thou erst, obedient to thy bent, by that same law which hither sped thy feet.

Such must thou be. None yet his Self outwent.

This rede sybil and seer of old repeat;
for, never time nor might could break asunder
the shape seed-hidden, whose life unfolds its wonder.

TYXII: DAS ZUFÄLLIGE
(Luck, Environment)

Yet Somewhat doth with gracious tread outgo
the straitest bound, and with and round us move.
Not lonely long; with fellows dost thou grow,
as oth'r well do, doth thee to do behoove.
Now for and now against thee falls the throw!
Thy life a game whose chances thou must prove.
The years, unnoted, have their ring united,
and now, the lamp doth lack the flame to light it.

EPΩΣ: LIEBE (Passion, Love)

Not long it tarrieth. From heaven He flings whereto He soar'd out of the primal Void.

Lo, hither he hovereth, on airy wings in springtide about brow and breast light-buoyed, feigning to flee, with subtle home-flutterings.

Then weal is woe — panic with sweetness cloyed. Some hearts waste in the many their emotion; the noblest to one only vow'th devotion.

ANAFKH: nöthigung

(Necessity, Fate)

'Tis then once more — even as the stars deem just: condition and law and the will of all — be will . . . for that alone in sooth we ought and must!

Each wilful wish before that Will hushed still; what most we prize from the heart's core we thrust; mood, will and whim the hard "thou shalt" fulfil. So fare we, yet, in seeming freedom, yearly more close beset than erst and hemmed more nearly.

EΛΙΙΙΣ: HOFFNUNG (Hope, Aspirations)

But from such metes and bounds, such walls of brass the stubborn gates unbolt them and unbar, tho' ancient as the hills their rocklike mass.

A Spirit light-flitteth, untrammelled; lo, we are from cloud-rack, reek and rain upcaught, and pass breathless with her, given wings of her, afar. Ye know Her well. No realm her revel may banish. One wing-beat — and the worlds behind us vanish!



ST. FRANCIS OF THE TREES

WRITTEN FOR THE ANNUAL DINNER OF THE STEVENSON FELLOWSHIP OF SAN FRANCISCO NOVEMBER 13, 1906

The waste of manhigh weeds—leafless and harsh—outstretcheth dismally—a purple gloom—into the marsh, whose inlets gleam and lure the eye, over its ruddy reaches to the bay's vague shimmery shine—and th' mist-bloomed farther shore:—

when lo, with yellow fire at the grey core enkindled, the haze, quick, hath burst aflame; and golden glamour over sky and land doth make what seemeth be,—what is—but seem. Bronzed marshes, flooded inlets, lurid field bewilder with an aspect ominous, and the soul, unreasoning, hushed and awed, doth bow before the enthralling mystery, and still doth the heart stand a moment for a dread unfeatured.

Ah, you do remember, friend, that breathless panic, the misgivings strange and bodings, which there rooted us awhile, until the oaks were wading ere we knew in fog knee-deep, to be submerged ere long—floating at intervals over the twilight flood the vanishing undulant outlines of their tops; while here and there the blue-gums, fain to flee the stealthy tide of sleep, yet rooted fast, as in a dream, essay in vain to fling their free forms loose!

Alas, alas, dear friend, how soon—too soon,—the dire fulfillment came of those premonitory fears: when rocked the earth

as insubstantial, and the tall palms bowed hither and thither to the ground;—when walls tottered and crashed, and th' heart leaped in affright, and th' roar smote deaf and dumb the helpless soul, and only the spirit dared believe and live!

But afterward ensued three days, and nights more hideous, of anguishful dismay:the city,-yea, our city-ours, even oursthe proud, luxurious, extravagant, fancy-free. She on her sandhills betwixt ocean and bay upbuilded-She . . . to us, upon the hitherside safe, lay under a dense pall of reek; and high to the very zenith, the ever-voluminous ever-toppling, ever-steadfast cone of smoke o'erflowed-and trailed a banner of horror grey to southward beyond sight; whereunder, O.what wicked glints of yellow-bloodthirsty eyes piercing the jungle-gloom,-whence flushes of shame and anger over heaven. And for three nights those awful splendors, crimson gushes, and leaps and flares of riotous light, and glows auroral; the while between, as in a trance, the bay floated a magic mirror of loveliness unreal, before the helpless throngs spellbound along the waterside forever at gazeon the long fierce sunset of our city!

At last with a sudden start we awoke (had it been hours or zons?) to the tense activities of nerve and heart:—relief for the shelterless, the hungry, the bewildered, the unclean; until the heart did sicken, and the soul fainted within the living body of death.

We hurried hither and thither, as the ant swarms;—ate, slept, wrought miracles, brake foolish jests—and all the while aware, the spirit, flown far, had left but animate automata,—nor ever again, it seemed, should we behold

the stars in ancient wise blazon once more the heavenly mind—the life with them beyond things petty done and known.

But suddenly befell-of sense no outer happening; nay, an interior change. As from the trance before, so from the nightmare now my soul started; and I cried to thee:-"Enough, enough! Come forth, friend, for a breath of the upper air, for a calm view of land and sea. Awhile let us this hateful desolation leave, the enormous wreckage, th' choking dust and grime, the swarming human foulness. Up together, up to the mountain-top oracular and neighbor to the stillness of the heaven. For, lieth not the dreaming giant Bride stretched on her bier eternal? and aroundwhat shrouded mourners gather them to-day? And over her doth bend a dream, methinks,moon-silvered spaces of quiet? And at her feet, moon-silvered likewise, see the ocean falleth adreaming, the selfsame hallowed dream of peace! Up, up Mount Tamalpais! Doth she not lie, the wraith of our stricken city, on the bier uplifted, shriven, for heaven to pity and bless? Up, let us climb; she is not dead-but sleepeth; then let us, brother, whisper as she dreams words in her ear of comfort, loyal love and faith undying. Up to the mountain, friend, with me."

So spake I not? But you, incredulous, eyed me and marveled. You—would not, nor could; for yet the pall was lifted not from you.

Ay, you waxed scornful:—"Go, friend. As for me I cannot leave the smoking ruins, to seek the mountain-top of vision. Rather you inquire of the Lord for us! Perchance He hath a word to speak who hindered not this horror;—

maybe He is still alive—the living God. . . . It was an accident! But you have seen, have suffered,—and you believe yet,—you believe! Ha, go then you unto the mountain whence cometh our help—the abundant help we had! And if you hear there some true word—to us bring it back faithfully,—us in th' grime and lime—us sons of chaos! Tell us what you saw thence of the wider, saner, sager view—what 'in the Mount' you heard! Farewell."

And I

intently looked at you! For I was 'ware how, notwithstanding my denials hot, your blasphemy proceeded—out of my heart. So, speechless with the ache of things unsaid, I turned—and fared upon my pilgrimage unto the Mountain of the dreaming Bride; and, knowing whither, recked not of the way,—my heart with thee,—my fellow, friend, and brother,—but of my spirit irresistibly borne on.

Ah, blessèd night, thou veilest mercifully marshes alike and wooded valleys warmand the slumber-heaving waters of the bay. The hills behind the daughter cities stand scarce visible against the sky; and over the stricken Mother herself the winding-sheet, woven of gentle dusks and argentine twilights! How sparkling-yea, and proudly gladhath not forthspread our Mother's wide domain. seen from the threefold swelling height, copse-hooded, of Grizzly, or from the sombre summit viewed. above the old-rose foothills mottled black with oaks-from Kawakoom, the Mount of Doom; or else surveyed from betwixt ocean and bay on either peak of the twain that overtop the many-towered city of hill and vale.

"What site for to set up her throne foursquare,-Pride of the Far West,-She, the shining eye of the Republic, to the Orient turned with restless eager quest, unworshipful, daring and challenging th' unknown across the sundering seas;-yea, the whole vibrating Occident of do and dare, insolently aflash in the defiant sweep of the glance. Ah, true, this, this the chiefest wealth,-thy glory of site and light, can no man take from thee! And meted therewith, O City, of what worth be all thy incalculable losses? Who shall thee bereave (tho' many of thy children mourn their dead) of thy prenatal memories? The alien tongue, still far-off echoing musically? the dreamful sweetness-vague hauntings of anthem, and of incense? yea, and more, how far more precious still thy Name? tho' th' irony thereof do oftenest smite thy well-wisher:-Thy sponsor, father in God,the little poor man of Assisi-Saint that loved his brethren tenderly-the flowers, the shrubs and trees,-his little brothers, too, beasts of the field, and fishes of the brook, birds of the bough and of the open sky! These things thou hast, thy site, thy memories prenatal, the ideal of thy name; these things, maybe not cherished as they ought of thee, O City, be thine inalienable birthright; not lost,-yea, thine,-perchance more thine than ever hitherto. And surely He, the holy Francis, will not he of all,-(though thine own children nourished at thy breast deny thee, disbelieving,) He, not now, whatever thy sin and shame, will thee forsake,the humble, simple, wistful, tender and meek, who spake with radiant joy-as a little childof brotherly love, sang praise of Poverty

wooed for the freedom's sake of the spirit of man unto more fragrancy of holiness and more transfiguring beauty of soul!

"Nay, rather methinks that he will visit thee, even thee, courageous in affliction, resolute in the hour of perished hope-O lavish still, O confident of thy destiny! And perchance He cometh even now. And, humbled so, thou wilt at length receive him, and ask of Him that he may teach thee how in very deed thou mightest be great and noble, magnificent and gracious! Enter, O City, and possess thy hallowed heritage, and in thy wealth new-got, thy pride of sumptuous power, as thou rebuildest thee, never forget to prize thy chiefer wealth of loveliness and charm . . . nor thy new glow of gratitude, abashed for the world's thought of thee in thy distress, which draweth thee nearer to the heart of love, O City of the Bride upon the Mount, dreaming the East beyond this golden West;-O City of the gentle godly man, still bidding thee most seek thy goodliest worth of heart and spirit!"

Thinking thoughts like these confusedly, I clomb, nor knew fatigue, no sense of body weighing, of the very mood of blessèd meditation lifted up as a wisp of mist that riseth on a breath unfelt of warmer air. And lo, recalled to the sight of the eye and the hearing of the ear: there lay the Mother City below me spread—her daughters three across the slumbering bay—atwinkle, atwinkle in gladness obstinate;—reaches of sky reflected magically—mirage of heaven upon the mirroring land—and more exceeding bright than starry space

of the wintery moonless vault-atwinkle, atwinkle, vivid, insistent-mirthful! And the moon cast her bewilderment of silvery haze over all things beside those constellations of earthly homes instinct with radiant life. Then, was my mood such, tho' I wist not why, I should not shrink, nor marvel-if the Mount were in the hallowed hush, with spirits alive about me. Did not Blake, singer and seer, graver and painter, with his dreams-awake hold converse? Here assuredly might onevea, such as I-be visited and behold yearnings unknown and wisdoms of mankind forthbodied in symbolic images: Heroes and Gods that walked the earth of old, bulls winged, and desert lions sunny-maned, and fiery Seraphim! Ah, surely here might one dare meet the great of heart, the good,-Osiris-Baldur-Krishna-Socrates-Isaiah-Sakyamuni-Laötzé-Plato and Dante, Shakespeare, Sophocles-Chaucer-and Homer? Whom might one not meet, and dare to walk with them, and, unabashed, talk with them, ay-tho' face to face alone?

Then was I 'ware there stood behind me one, and the mystery of the unseen did sweetly send shudders all over. Yet I turned me not, lest the human music to the ear of the soul should faint away into the silences of God. But gently on my shoulder touched, the thrill went through me more deliriously. And as I turned in marvel, and breathless hope of rapturous surprise—my eyes met his! And, no whit startled did I hear myself—as not myself—speak witless words to him:—"Most holy Francis, art thou here at last? I knew thou couldst not tarry long—nor ever forget thy city."

—"Nay, son,—sayest thou forget my city? Never;—Yet is she builded not on the earth."

And wrath did choke, tho' reverence speech restrained: "Thou wouldst disown the lost, the humbled, the destroyed? Not well doest thou, holy man!"

"Never, son, never.

Her would I not disown had she been mine.

She hath my name received;—but hath she aught more than the name of me, that I might call her mine in truth, thou being witness, son?

If I should lift my voice up in her streets, her wharves, her marts, her palaces, would She thence answer to my calling, 'I am thine'?"

And my wrath died straightway to shame. I cried, "Have mercy, holy man, upon us!" And he calmly envisaged me, unearthly-still, deep-probing with unquivering lids-wherefore a wrath did seize me and throttle, (of the mindnot of the heart rebellious):-"Thou, meseems askest of Her what cannot be, nor should! Shall-speak-a city of living men, a city of women, a city of children, be as thou? as thou?-and meditate in the wilds with thee in starvèd idleness-until all hands, all feet, all sides, as thine of old did, gape with bleeding impress of insensate griefswounds of imagination insanely rapt in the accidents of a tragic symbol? Nay, thou askest too much, God wot, O holy man! And if my mind betray me not, not meek art thou! Meek, verily? Arrogant rather for worths impossible, preposterous hopes, ideals inhuman, unearthly, devilish! accusing man of evil,-yea, and God who made him such, and judged him very good, foreknowing the end of childish innocence,

the lusts of the natural life,-the world's command to strive, and cry,-to slay and eat and live!to prey, to ravage; voluptuously taste the foaming cup, for passionate ecstasy, whence the new life, the holiness of home, the fashionings imaginative of things to bodily use, and spiritual;-yea, the very ardors of godliness and communings in mystic rapture! Wherefore darest thou, for thy tense passion of delights perverse in anguish, bid that all men come to thee and follow, doing likewise? If thou be verily he that loved the natural life (and men have fabled not a saner myth than was in truth thy very self!)-if thou didst love the impulsive, unconstrained free life of bird, of beast, of fish, of flower, shrub, tree,why ban,-outcast-the instinctive life of man? The flesh, anhungered? the longings, pieties of the innocent beast in him? quest, omen, vaunt of power, of beauty, of knowledge? Speak, O speak! Speak, holy man of God! If just thou be, ask not of this, the city of thy name, things thou well knowest impossible!'

And he

replied with smile translunary that shamed in its indulgence sweet: "Son, son, perchance thou errest knowing not me. I lived as thou now livest. Was not I child of my day as thou of thine? To each generation, son, its names of God belong, its services of sense, the strengths human-divine: its faiths of spirit, hopes of heart, its disciplines, devotions! Wherefore, should I of this city say 'I know her not'—it were for cause;—that She to her own holiest vision is blind, and deaf to her own words of the Lord, spoken for her of Him, in this her day of life, and His Who ever liveth!"

"Father, forgive that I knew thee so ill," came from my second self the humble answer, after the brain awhile throbbing beat out in rhythm fantastical a silence of dismay. "The word God spake to thee, thou didst obey, even as thereof thy understanding gave thee interpretation; and thou wast faithful found. What deemest thou His word and fiat unto the city of thy name! Forgive the wrong my thought hath done thee, and speak, that I may go hence knowing the truth; and I swear to utter it in thy name!"...

"And thine?"

"And live it-body and soul?" he seemed to ask ironically; yet his lips did move not, and his eyes looked far beyond all visible things. And awe forbade more urgent questioning. For then meseemed the mighty Mountain under us breathed where we stood,—the pillow of the Bride. wavering responsive to her heaving breast, and with her dream-life pulsating. Athrill with novel stirrings of the abysmal self, I felt me drawn, and swallowed mystically, into her dream,-as tho' within me dreamed.and close was I therein enfolded, when lo! mists rose upbillowing,-soundless, soft, swift,and from the fluctuant mists there issued trees, ghostly, yet seeming-real, that glided near, and the steep circled, and, with their boughs awave, sang with the voice of a wind unfelt:-

"We come,

O holy man, to thee. For thee we know, tho' men may know thee not. We come to thee. Thou calledst us thy brethren, and we dare call thee our brother; and, we pray thee, choose freely of us the better—he that truth and right and beauty is alone—for her, the city of thy name. Hear thou, and judge!

Discern the evil within us, and the good; and as thy choice, even so shall be our will,—we whom thou callest brethren equally, who love thee all alike."

And the holy man smiled on them,—and his face lit up with love and gentle pity and joy; as tho' the trees brought solace above human fellowship, and wafted skyey bloom and redolence of the far Apennines,—of communings solitary,—he alone, yet not alone, for One was with him; and—the trees and shrubs, the flowers, the beasts of the field that stealthily neighbored him, all the finny folk of the brook that leaped from crystalline cool to hear his word; and th 'birds of the air that hovered over him in warbling skyfuls of beatitude!

"Speak, Brother Leo!" And wistfully he smiled, correcting him:-"My Brother Live-oak, speak!" And the tree bowed him, reverent, and spoke:-"Behold me, holy man, for what I am,rugged and sturdy, stalwart, valorous,my wood of grain close-fibred, knotty, hard; I root down in the depth, and reach forth free to North, to South, to East, to West. My trunk overleans, see, and my branches, tortuous, leap to grapple the elusive air. And no strong wind strippeth my solemn leafage. If my shadow shall sombre seem or sullen:-what I have that do I hold; for mine is mine, thine, thineif thou canst hold it thus, as mine I hold! So understand I the stern law of right. Shall I not be the emblem chosen of thee for the city of thy name?"

And the Live-oak bowed before the holy man and yielded room to the Cypress. "Holy man, as the oak am I,

my brother; tho' less dark-browed frowneth he than I. For I do hold mine own as he: but more, do wave off with forbidding arms the stranger. Am I not of the ancient stock indigenous, fiercely myself? and staid and staunch in my fierce self-hood? Wherefore not? Shall they possess who builded not, and reap who sowed in other furrows the seed of former hope? Yet unto him who doth my will divine, am not I tame and gentle, obedient to his least wish and fantasy:-who build a wall of dusk-about his garden of ease, and bid the intruder avaunt? The outcast eye can pierce no privacy I fend. The winds blustering can pass me not. Nor may the sun himself coerce me to surrender the shadow of night, the cool of the morning and the dew unwillingly! Wilt thou not then accord to me the right to be thy city's tree?"

And when the Cypress bowed him, forward moved the gay Acacia. "I am graceful of growth and fragile. Yet if the March wind shall tear my branches loose, I fling in his face new life; yea, flaunt all over the golden blossom-balls fragrant, bee-haunted, raining gold-dust down in the lap of the greening earth; yea, see my bloom, plentiful, unsuspicious of evil days, tossed into the golden sunbeams gladsomely of those first days after the winter rains, when the sky is blue, the air pellucid, fresh! Shall sunny hours be gloomy for that storms have come and gone,-will come again and go? Nay, glut thee radiantly with all good things and beautiful the while the sun is lord. Am I not, holy man, the only tree of the happy and lavish, the city of thy name?"

And the holy man did smile:—"Gold—gold! Take all, thy gold and buy thee—purer gold therewith,

whereof thief cannot reave thee-evermore." Yet from his lips no word fell-and who it was spake in his stead I wot not. But straightway the Pepper bowed, and plead his better right:-"Thou dost behold me, holy man, with love! For delicate the showers of rain about me,of fringing green; as emerald hill on hill, astride and elbowing one another, thrown carelessly forth out of the gnarly trunk,and for thy gaze held forth of twisting boughs. Pale are my blossoms, inconspicuousin clusters sociable; but mark my pungent berries, a-dangle in russet plenty. Am I aught else but languorous grace, of strength begot and valor? Ever fresh verdure light delicately abundant, with subtle odorousness that no beast croppeth me careless:-without thorn defended of my savor of self, who am 'I',yea, even 'I' only ever! Wilt not thou, in thy wise gentleness, award to me the honor of thy choice?"

And it was so ere th' Pepper bowed him, eager as a child overmuch fondled, the Madrone brake forth in wayward winsome speech: "Nay, Father, hear. My claim thou wilt not waive-for I am he that speaketh with the eldest eloquence persuasive-the sweet language of the flesh, which God made chaste and clean-for pure delight;whereover his hand passed lovingly with pride of fatherhood. The flesh-the delicate flesh, responsive to the vibrant world of things; clothing new spirit from age to age, for thought and novel adventure! See my foliage shields, shining as tho' sunshine abode in them bodily. See the ruddy bark of me in th' gloss of the noon-heat upcurled, to lisp and whisper secrets of the passionate heart! See, from th' rough mantle of mine ancient trunk

escapeth-bare voluptuously breasts and side-frank rosy flesh of the awakened maid, the dryad of wanton illusive loveliness who flitteth forth-ah, whither? Canst thou sayto follow? Yet another dryad soon abideth in mottled shine and green-gold shade, thriddeth the self-same path thro' the greenwood onglinting-and vanished, ere thou wottest well she is she, and not thyself! O innocence of human flesh-O glory of glad delight! God's way of life whereover the spirits pass from brutal hate unto His loving-kindness! Am not I of the pleasure-loving folk, true Tree,--the emblem of the city's joy? And shalt thou not prefer me unto Oak that liveth hard to get and hold; to Cypress that yieldeth kindness unto one, to irk with a harsh righteousness another:-nay, unto the Acacia, that is foolish-glad of lucky and lightsome fates extravagant;unto the Pepper also, that doth green gracefully for the sole sake of graciousness,but hath no deep unsearchable well of joy, as I,-the flesh, whence every goodliness of body and soul and spirit?"

And th' holy man looked long methinks upon the bold Madrone with pitying eye. "Ay, she loved much," one said, "because so many were her sins forgiven; and what she did she knew not—therefore all shall be forgiven her—whatso she hath done!" And slowly he turned his head away as tho' to hide a tear. And, shamed, and marvelling much, the glad Madrone, no longer confident, withdrew her (wonderful the mystery of godliness!), and she abode in wistful fear the judgment.

Whereupon the Blue-gum spake:-"Not, holy man, indigenous am I. From the far Austral world of barren heat hither I came, and the Southern Cross did shine in the still nights of my prenatal sky. But here, see, am not I as all thy folk of the great city?—lawless, vagabond, my leafage hung in freakish tufts, in ragged delicate festoons, in dense loose-jumbled masses; or I toss them forth, at will, see, see, frondlike, in air, to scatter to the wind as fettered birds that flutter in vain to flee, brought ever to a sweet captivity home? Behold my splotchy blossoms, my haphazard clusters of aromatic fruit, together on the same tree,-at the same season, abideeach bough his leisure and mood! And my trunk, see,the bark protective torn, dishevelled and shed in long loose strands;-while under, grey or green, as best shall like me! But evermore around one only scent, mine own-wholesome? mordant? So of our Kind each one unto himself liveth, his precedent free and wilful law. No straightening type shall hold of kith and kin: himself!-himself triumphantly! Yet see, how, when they list, my kindred range arow, and charge in ranks unbroken the hillside steep. and pierce the skyline, and unfurl aloft the banner of a common victory! Yet ever individual, confident, true to his life only; -yet so livingly alive, we dare the death, and cry aloud, 'Slay us who will!' For, if thou hew and fell and slay, do I forthwith uprise not, yea, and mock thee with quick growth from the sawn roots? Am not I, holy man, for good and ill the emblem tree for the city of thy name?"

And all the trees were glad of the insolent joy of his own selfhood; and yet uneasily

swayed betwixt hope the Blue-gum should be chosen, and natural fear that any be preferred before himself. But the last of the seven trees was speechless till the holy man made sign the Redwood should his cause plead. Then, he spake:—

"Ill, holy man, beseemeth me to praise myself. Yet what I am, I am; by grace nowise of mine own will. And for His praise who wrought me as he would, behold, I dare display me, worshipfully with my worth his worth extolling. From an ancient age of th' earth survivor, chosen of life to live, and carry down some word of the former world unto the world that knoweth it not; behold, I tower, vast of girth, dizzy of upright height. The forests olden of oak and of madrone be as wavy wild grass at my feet. Full often under my branches stealeth the salt sea-fog, and, over his billowy flood, converse I hold unbroken, with the constellations of night primeval. Yet bulk no glory were, to grasp; for the woodwardias, tiger-lilies, and pale campanulas, fairer than I, by the creek do nestle my roots among; whereas aloft I fray in lacelike traceries of fadeless green. And if thou for mine age no reverence know, and hew and fell me (for, flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone, the city of thy namethat is no more-was builded out of me, dead for her sake), yet rise I from the dead; but not in the selfsame room where erst I stood from the grey dusks before the dawn of time; nor single, solitary, shall I rise again. Thou knowest for me of old was it decreed, ere were the hills thus rounded of the rains. that from the extreme edges of the reach should from my roots upspring, a mystic round, and wax to majesty the red-barked sons of me that was. And lo, no more alone

we, shall draw down the hot noon-sun to dwell in a green-golden halo, in our midst. The gnats go looping spirally in flight their sheeny myriads thro' the quiet, held sacred within our circuit. Gossamer threads wave loose there, or net over from bough to bough, in wind-still shimmer. But if thou at night stand, of our outer awe inwalled, alonethen shall we be to thee, who prayest there, a dial of eternity; the stars looking in one by one, and for a space abiding, to pass on. Then shalt thou rede the blessèd law of the singleness that dieth for the more holy round of manyhood, to thrive, and speechless say by what we be:-Mighty in uprightness, in delicate strength gracious; who die not ever in our death, but sociably a temple do uprear with free sky overdomed-a holy ring of a new life columnar—to ensphere symbols of the invisible, and hold in hush the speech, and in celestial time th' eternities of the Unknown we know."

Then smiled the holy man a loving smile, and dwelt upon the Redwood fondly and long—till Oak, Cypress, Acacia, Pepper, Madrone, Blue-gum, and Redwood chaunted together:—"Choose, oh, choose which one of us shall be the Tree for emblem of the city of thy name; and as thy choice even so shall be our will, we whom thou calledst brethren equally, who love thee all alike. Oh, choose,—oh, choose!"

And I looked then from the seven trees away unto the holy man. And I beheld how he did slow withdraw once more his eyes from vision of things unseen; and fixed his gaze that saw, yet saw not, upon each in turn

tenderly; then wide opened he his mouth and spake, spreading his arms abroad:—

"My brothers, together so to live in unity is it not blesseder, as ye have proved, better and blesseder-far blesseder than to be chosen, tho' chosen of God,-alone?" And lo, he faded slowly into mist, the holy man; and in the fading light of the westering moon, the trees did follow him, their brother, and fade after him. But I, startled, awoke and cried, "Ere thou dost quite vanish, speak, Father, speak,-which tree!" And I knew not his inmost mind, for never word spake he in vanishing. Only meseems his smile had longest dwelt and fondliest on the generous giant tree of the ages gone; on the tree that gave himself gladly for Her, the city that was; on the tree that riseth again for the City that yet shall be;-that she learn of him-the primitive worship of the truth in nature, the feminine delicacy and gracenay, lightness rather fairylike, of Him, the mightiest that upright stand, and rise in holy rings enshrining utter peace, and golden sun and stars,-and quivering dark of the unseen.

And soon, when all were passed into the unbeheld, from the ocean a snow-soft ghostly white fog uprose, and overpoured slowly the mountain's flank, and flooded in thro' the Golden Gate, and covered all the bay with a relucent sea of stillness. Stars did pale to points invisible one by one; and a note now and then, quick, tentative, in the brush chirruped. And the eastward masses, voluminous, infinite, of phantom hills and cloud, with hands of spirit uplift

slow—slowly high, the holy heavenly host of the sun eternal, for worship of the world: Golden effulgence spiritual amidst the rosy flush of ever new life and love!











